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THE LETTER 'AİN AND OTHER ARABIC LARYNGAL LETTERS AS USED IN BENGALI LANGUAGE

H. C PAUL

The Arabic (or rather the Semitic) letter 'Ain is said to be a laryngal, consonant sound, as uttered in the throat, the other letters that are produced from the same organ of utterance as found in the Semitic group of words are said to be '(hamza), 'h' (hā), 'h' (hā), and 'h' (or commonly called khā). These are said to be sounds not found in any other language-group of the world. But this cannot be a fact; yet if it be so, we should at least appreciate that as social beings, the effect of their sounds, must have influenced the so-called other language-group of the world. Besides, as human beings are surely of one origin; and again as they are continually mixing with one another, which habit is really innate in human nature, we may at least find out the character of these sounds, by observing how the so-called foreigners accepted them.

Owing to the varied mode of expression in sounds by the different language-groups, it is really very hard to assess the sounds of a language of one group with those of another, having a comparison between them. However, we find as regards 'h', the mention of three sounds by the Sanskrit scholars, much as *visarjaniya* (or *visarga*) *jihvāmūliya* and *upadhmāniya*. In some respects *visarjaniya* may be compared with *hamza*. but *hamza* (from Arabic root verb *hamza*, to beat, push) as its meaning signifies, is a 'compressed' sound, while *visarjaniya* has a sort of relief in its sound, which as such may often be elided over. Yet mark the pl. form of *hamzā* that is *hamazātu*: it may thus be Persian *hamzā*, born (or rather appearing) everywhere and may also be equivalent to Skt. *sama-jāta*, (sound) produced with a symmetry (everywhere). In some respects the Sanskrit *visarjaniya* (transliterated as 'h') may be compared with Persian 'h', used at the end of a word and is called *hā-yi-makhtafī*, i. e., concealed or mute 'h'. But the same sound when pronounced

at the end of a word is called *hā-yi-malfūzī* or- *zāhir*, the manifest or the aspirate sound of 'h', where the tongue, the vehicle of sound, is in action. This second Persian (or Arabic) 'h' is equivalent to Skt. aspirate sounds joined with the other mute or sonant consonant letters, besides the independent 'h' (as a separate letter). This aspirate sound (connected with other consonant mutes or media) are respectively called *jihvāmūliya* when it is joined with guttural and palatal letters, *upadhmāniya* when joined with dental or labial letters.

This aspirate 'h', generally known as the 'spirant' surd sound, "is not, however, according to Whitney, its real character. It is defined by all native authorities as not a surd element, but a sonant, but what is its precise value is very hard to say. The Paninian scheme ranks it a guttural, as it does also *a*. This means nothing. The *Prātisākhya*s bring it into no relation with the guttural class" (*Sanskrit Grammar*, p. 65)

The Semitic 'h' is not generally found available in other groups of different languages. But let us see how it effects other languages. This 'h' is called in Persian *hā-yi-huṭṭī* or *hā-yi-halqī* (as uttered by the throat or in the palate), where as the simple 'h' is *hā-yi-havvaz* or *hā-yi-mudawwara* (or round *hā*, i. e., in recognition of its outer form). This simple 'h' is also called *hā-yi-makhtaftī* or-*malfūzī*, as already referred to, according to its two different sounds, as expressed in *karda* from *kardan*, to do, and *dah*, ten (Skt *daśa*). Again, *havvaz* means the sound that is rustling, corresponding to *malfūzī*, but in the later the sonant sound as it proceeds on is abruptly cut off, whereas in the *havvaz* the sound proceeds along, that is, joined with different short vowels, such as *zabar*, *zīr* or *pish*, or with Arabic names *fatha* (or short *a*), *kasra* (or short *i*) and *ḍamma* (or short *u*), as we find in all imitating sounds in Bengali, such as, *hi hi*, *hā hā* (i. e., *ha* plus *a* and *ha* plus *a*), etc.

When we go to discuss the Arabic 'h' sound, it appears that real guttural sound is almost lost in the other language groups. For, whereas *K*-group or the *kanthya*-sounds are guttural in our vocabulary, it is represented to be palatal (rather produced from the hard palate) in the Semitic group of languages. Yet the remnant of its sound appears to be available when we compare

the different words of the Semitic and Aryan group (according to their inner meanings), such as Gk. *horus*, Skt. *hara(s)* and Ar. *hāris(u)*, watchman, guard. Again, the word *Ahmad*, the most chosen one, appears to be connected with Beng. *āmōde*, one who is pleasing to all ('h' being intolerable to the Aryan tongue, it has been dropped, with the lengthening of the *a* sound).

The name *hā-yi-ḥutti*, for this sound or its sundering aspect, probably best represents its real significance. *Ḥutti*, from its root verb *ḥatṭa*, to fall down, go down, may be explained as that sound which has been fallen down from its original sound *a* (by being aspirate or sonant), or, with its inner significance, it may also be interpreted as, it is the expression of human nature, so long he has not reached its perfection, and as such deviated from its original sound 'a' (or rather from the sound-ness of its 'Be-ing')

The Semetic '*h*' (or *khā*) is called in Persian *khā-yi-thakhudh*, *manqūṭa* (i. e., with a *nuqṭa* or point to differentiate it from *ḥ* or '*h*'), or-*mu'jama* (i. e., a sound not known to the Persians, or rather the obscure sound with an obscure *u*). It is really far more hard or barded than the aspirate *h*. Note the Persian *khudā* cognate with Skt. *svadhā*, again modern Persian *shāh* is said to be originated from its old Persian *khudā* (as in *shāh-nāma* from its old form *khudāy-nāma*). Compare again Persian *khwāhur* for *sister* (OE. *swuster*, Skt. *svasr*-). As '*h*' (or *h*) is often changed to *s*, so also *h* (or *kh*) is found to be pronounced as *sv* in the Aryan languages. Compare in this connection the word *harf*, pl. *harūf*, (Arabic) letters; it may well be said to be cognate with Skt. *sarava*, the Self that is proceeding along with its murmuring sounds, expressing its real, sound self (Cf. *harf-i sahih*). It may also be noted that the consonant letters are said to be the real letters in Arabic, whereas its vowels are only in one way or other effecting its expression (Cf. *harf-i illat*). But in the Aryan languages the vowels are said to be the 'Letters of the Self' (Cf. *svara-varna* or the sound-ing letters); and consonants are only in one way or other helping to express the *svara-varnas* or rather mainly 'a', who is really *amuttara*, the Indescribable One.

As opines W. D. Whitney, "The *a* is the openest vowel, an utterance from the expanded throat, stands in no relation of

kindred with any of the classes of consonant sounds, and has no corresponding semi-vowel. Of the close vowels *i* and *u*, on the other hand, *i* is palatal, and shades through its semi-vowel *y* into the palatal and guttural consonant-classes, *u* is similarly related, through its semi-vowel *v*, to the labial class, as involving in its utterance a narrowing and rounding of the lips.

The Paninean scheme (commentary to *Pāṇini's Grammar*, 1.1.9) classes 'a' as a guttural, but apparently only in order to give that series as well as the rest a vowel, no one of the *Prātiśākhya*s puts *a* into one class with *k*, etc. All these authorities concur in calling the *i* and *u* vowels respectively [palatal and labial.

"The short 'a' is not pronounced in India with the full openness of 'a', as its corresponding short, but usually as the "neutral vowel" (English so-called "short u", of *but. son, blood*, etc.) This peculiarity appears very early, being acknowledged by two of the *Prātiśākhya*s, which call the utterance *samvṛta*, covered up, dimmed" (*Sanskrit Grammar*, 20, 21).

In a sense, the sound or the soundness of the letter 'a' (or *anuttara*) is beyond description. Yet if we are to have any idea of it, it may be called "the neutral vowel", as expressed by the Perso-Arabic word *Alif*, most probably cognate with the Skt. *a-lipta*, not engrossed to physical nature at any time. And the same *alif*, when it is extended or exhaled (Cf Skt. *mada*) in its pronunciation, is called *ālif* (with *madd*) or rather *alif-i madd-i saut*.

In reality, our Persian language will help us in many ways to distinguish how a so-called foreigner (belonging to Aryan group of languages) accepted the language of another so-called foreign language, i. e., Arabic, belonging to Semetic group of languages. Besides, the Persians were so influenced by the culture of the so-called foreigners that they almost merged into them, by taking their religion (of Islām) and also their script (in Arabic) Yet it is to be noted that the independent characteristic of their language (i. e., Iranian) remains. In other words, we may say that the characteristic of a language, which is only the reflect of the Man, is to 'give and take' So long the culture (of a language, or its nation) is superior to another, it will influence the other, but in reality no man is inferior or superior. The

absence (or rather the disorderly *sense* . from the Latin root *esse*=to be ; i e for the fault of not knowing our true *essence* or real existence, Cf. Skt *as-ti*) of mutual understanding among one another is really the cause of deviation, making so many groups, whether of language, culture or religion and keeps us far away from one another

But this so-called 'deviation' is again helping us to review our past short-comings. And in this way the ever-moving 'soul' of different 'cultures' is proceeding on. Therefore, let us see how the distinguishing characteristic of the so-called 'Iranians' and 'Semitics' took *alif* in their 'sounds' (or in the soundness of the different mental attitudes) of 'letters'. It may also be noted that *alif*, cognate with Gk. *alpha* (from which comes our *alphabet*) is from Hebrew *aleph*, meaning, ox, leader. Considering its inner significance, it may justly be connected with Beng *alpa*, meaning 'scanty, less' (or Per. *kam*, lit my physical nature). Compare also the Sanskrit *nālpe sukham asti*, i. e., the joy of human nature should not rest content only with 'all' physical pleasures of the body and mind ; for 'M', the Man, *par excellence*, the *Uttama Purusa* (i. e. the ut-most or utter-most personality of 'A' as a 'Be-ing' that can be expressed through *utter-ance*), is to surpass them all to have the 'Bliss' (or the amplitude of nature)

Now, as regards the different characteristics of *alif*, it is thus discussed by Dr. D C. Phillot : "The Persians, unlike the Arabs, look on *alif* as an original letter and not as born from 'W', (*waw*) or 'Y' (or *yā*). If it commences a word, it is to be regarded as having no sound of itself, it is merely a prop for the vowel (written or understood) that accompanies it. If it occurs in the middle of a word, it is a prolongation of the short vowel *fatha* and is transliterated by *ā*, irrespective of its modern pronunciation (in different regions, as *ā* in *father* or in *ball*; or even *ū*, as *dukūn* for *dukān*, 'shop' *Higher Persian Grammar*, p. II)

"In many cases the *alif* is pronounced broad ; thus *bād*, 'wind,' is pronounced nearly like *bawd*", as if pronounced as *ba'd*, 'after'. This kind of pronunciation may be puzzling to even "an educated Persian", as Dr. Phillott remarks, but it is truly for the sake of not properly understanding the real significance or the symbolic meaning of the different letters, as the

'wise' understood them. For, to them (the Latin phrase) *Verbum (sat) sap (ienti)*, meaning, 'A word is enough to the wise'. And because, their words and actions or the subject and the predicate were in conformity with one another. Here also like *bād*, compare the word *bād*, 'let it be' from *būd-an*, 'to be', which is pronounced also as *bu-ad*, a verb in the present tense in distinction from the verb in the past tense, *būd*. Both *bu-ad* and *bād* are really originated from the Skt. root *bhū*, 'to be' and *ad*, 'to eat'. That is, when the *bhū-ta*, or the past actions of a *be-ing*, is eaten up by the spiritual Self, or given up to its physical nature with all pleasure, as if saying, 'let it be', then (Cf. Ar. *ba'd*, after) only the passionate desire, compared to the 'wind', is extinguished, and his spiritual life begins to float in the Heavenly Sky.

Dr. Phillott also remarked · "*Alif* in arithmetic (Cf. ME. *arsetrike*, from Skt. *ārṣa-mātrkā*, lit. the symbolic signs of the *ṛṣis* or the wise of the East) represents the number one; and in astronomical tables and almanacs, Taurus and Sunday. It also signifies an unmarried man". *Sunday* (Cf. Ar. *al-ahadu*) or the Day of the Sun is the *ravi-vāra* in Skt, literally meaning: the inner soul that exists in the Self (as *be-ing* separated as 'I' and 'Thou') is ever proceeding on (Cf. Per. *ravi*) its further stages (Cf. Skt. *vāra*) of spiritual life (Cf. Per. *bār*, 'once, fruit, admittance', also *bāra*, meaning, subject, that concerns the inner Self) only to quench thirst (Cf. Ar. *rawi*) of physical pleasures by realizing that all outwardly appearing selves are really one's own self.

The *alif* with the symbol of an unmarried man, is *yuva-ka*, or an youth who has not yet begun his spiritual life, with the real main purpose of developing his mental attitudes to the state of manhood, the *Brahmacārī*, who is following the path of life only for the expansion of the Self, that embraces all, whose epitome is the *Viśva-Brahmānda*. The *yuvaka* is feminized as *yuva-ti* in Skt. or Beng. But it is only an aspect of the real affairs. The word *yu'va-ka* is really interesting as regards its philological connections. *Yu* in Skt. means 'to unite'; *-va-* has its inner significance of the 'Self' [Cf. Eng. *s-elf*, *e* being a *sandhi* or combination of *a* and *i*, i.e. with *alf(a)*], or rather the intrinsic quality of any being (Cf. *s-va*) and thing (*t-va*), and *-ka*, as

is a suffix with a diminutive sense, so also it means the shadow or the physcat appearance (of the Indescribable Self, or *a*, the *Anuttara*) Again, from *yu-* is formed the words like, Skt. *yu-ga* or *u g-ma*, Eng *yo-ke* (OE *geoc*) and its corresponding Lat. *yu-gum* Similarly it may be connected with Per. *juyam*, 'I seek' from *justan*, 'to seek, whose 2nd sing, is *juyad*, probably cognate with Skt. *yu-va-ti*, which really means the physical force that inspires a *yu-vā* on its further progress (to spiritual life)

Now, it is to be noted that as a consonant cannot be expressed without a vowel, so also a semi-vowel. *Y* is a semi-vowel both in Eng and Skt. But in Arabic there is no semi-vowel. The so-called semi-vowels are also *harf-i sahih* in Arabic (or Persian) 'Y' is represented in Arabic by *yā* with a *kasra* (short *i*). But how it would pronounce 'y' with a *fatḥa* (or short *a*), as in Skt *y-a*? In fact, 'y' is a transgressing state to effect the sounds of the consonants, as in Skt., so in Arabic. In 'y' in Skt. a short *a* (as its prefix) is really understood, which may well be compared with the letter '(*ain*)' in Arabic, as will be found in our illustrations in the Bengali words (with the Arabic '(*ain*)). Besides this, we also find that often in Bengali though 'y' is not pronounced, it is only being used as an ornamental sign or prop to show its transgressing state which it originally possessed (as in *yāo-y-ā*, 'to go', *hao-y-ā*, 'to be'). And also it is for this reason that any so-called foreign tongue (or rather an unaccustomed tongue, habituated with it) often changes its pronunciation to 'j' or drops it.

While figuring the state of one's ideal or the most Beloved one (as the form of *alif*), the Persian often makes a comparison of the same with an erect stature of a *sarv* (or cypress) tree, or the straight nose of beauty. The Persian *sarv* is surely cognate with Skt *sarava*, which has already been referred to as connected with Ar. *harf* or its pl *harūf* Really 'a' is the import of all letters, while others, i.e., *akārādī*, are only its consequences.

In its symbolism of 'nose' with beauty, the Persian poetry is only showing its favour to love (or '*ishq*'), while the Indians to knowledge, which is their ideal of worshipping, when we find that it is their process to mentalize their thought on the front of a nose. Again, note the words, Beng. *nāk*, or '*nāka*' and *nāsā* or *nāsikā* in Skt. They are really the epitome (cf. *ka* or *kā*)

of their joyous human nature (Cf. *n-ā*) which, when becomes negative of their selfish motives, proceeds on to its spiritual plane (Cf *s-i*), and there they find the physical stature of their own selves in unison with all human beings (Cf. Perso-Arabic *nās*, or *insān*, mankind, from its roots *nasī-a*, to forget, and *ānasa*, to cheer, and again Cf. Skt. *nas*, pl acc. of *Aham*, meaning 'I', in the sing. nom.) In fact, all objective selves or the accusative forms are to be lost (Cf. Beng. *nāś* or *naśta*, from root *naś*, to be lost), when the self attains its unity with the Self, who is nothing but the epitome of his Higher or Supreme Self (*Uṭtama Purusa*). Compare also the Bengali word *nākā* or *nyākā*, to presume to be good (from Per *nīk*) and the Eng. verb in the past tense *nak-ed*, i.e., stripped off from its physicality, all of which may well be connected with the Ar. verb *na'qa*, 'to croak' (like the crowing of a cock), a joyful cry of the infant (a nasal sound) not yet developed to the sound-ness of a perfect man.

The real meaning of the word *sa-rava* in comparison with *nī-rava* should also be carefully noted. *Sa-rava* ordinarily means noise, or with all high sounds; and *nī-rava*, silent, or not with any pronouncement. Literally *sa-rava* is the sound of the Self that is proceeding on (to *anuttara*); or (taking 'a' as meaning 'I am', as is often used in Vedic language) 'I am with all sounds' (that dwell in my inner self). And *nī-rava* is the inspiring sound of the common people that is proceeding on (to *anuttara*); or, I am the representative sound of the common mass that works in the inner Self. Spiritually signifying, 'a' (which is the purest, and at the same time most open, sound) is really the sound of a (Divine) Man, who is of the purest type, and endowed with all spiritual knowledge (i.e., 'a' or an *anuttara*, who is endowed with all *jñ-a*). That is why it is the only 'original' sound, the like of which cannot be found in the Semitic language; and in the Aryan group this is the source of all sounds, but its use cannot generally be recognized. Accordingly in Bengali (when used as a prefix), the sound 'a' is generally taken with a negative meaning. But it is really the one original sound, which is neither a vowel nor a consonant, but all vowels and consonants are included in it (which probably was the original conception of the Vedic view of their division of letters); and

'a' is there only the *a-varṇa* (i.e., it is no letter, yet it absorbs all letters). It is for this reason, according to the Vedic view, the consonants are *vyañjana-varṇa*, and the vowels, *svara-varṇa*; whereas in the Semitic language both the so-called vowels along with the consonants are real letters (*harūf-ī sahih*), and the defective sounds are generally called *harūf-ī illat* that cause the real sound from the Self to be expressed out.

In this connection, compare also the word *ārbi* (*bhāsā*) as used in Bengali for the Arabic language which in its own region is expressed by *al-'arabiyatu*, and their people style themselves as *al-'arabu*, while an individual *Arab* is called an '*Arabī*'. It appears that the "Arabs", which is also expressed by the word '*urban* (μ), were the people who at the first stage of transition from the symbolic meaning of a letter to the syllabic meaning of a word (by the help of its roots, with prefixes and suffixes) claimed themselves to be the correct pronouncers of the original letters, and the pronouncing of the people of the other groups of languages was to them to some extent defective, when we find that, their verb *a'raba* itself means 'to speak clearly' (or he was an '*Arab* who spoke correctly) and *arraba*, 'to Arabicize a foreign word'. Specially when we find that the Egyptian culture (or Beng. *muṣariya sabhyatā*) was at its highest stage of grandeur, while they were claiming themselves to be the only *urban* people, whereas the 'wise' (or *rṣīṣ*) proceeding on the noble path (Cf. *Ārya*) of the Vedas were at that time deeply bent on thoughts spiritual (Cf Skt. *ārśa*). The Bengali word *miḥarī* (pronounced as *misri*), meaning 'sugar-candy' (Beng. *śarkarā-khaṇḍa*) originated from Arabic *misrī(yu)*, meaning 'an Egyptian', also approves this fact, when we find that its root verb *massara* means 'to build cities', and *misr* (u), Egypt, or a great city.

Probably the nasal sound is the only sound which is particularly special for the human beings; and the other sounds that they pronounce, can only be sounded with the help of *svara-varṇas*, which are all directly derived from the purest sound 'a'. That the sounds of the evil spirits are expressed with a nasal tone, is probably specially with this significance. Again, many persons that utter nasally with a twang, making the nose their tongue, while they are asleep, are only expressing their

nature of the common human behaviour and that expression is called in Bengali *nāk dākā*, lit a 'call' as an expression of the epitome of the pleasure of human selves (when they are lying with their inner self)

In Arabic *alif* is often used as a particle of interrogation, as in *A-lastu bi-rabbikum*, "Am I not your Lord?" (*Qur'ān*, vii, 168). As the letter 'I' is definitely taken as a sign for negation, there is no other way but to express 'a' as a particle of interrogation. But 'I' in its symbolic sense represents the sub-conscious or the super-conscious self of 'be-ing' whose identity is lost in its degeneration as human beings. It is to be regained, hence the question or the urge for finding it out. 'L' is also found to be a particle for past actions in Bengali. In reality, when a soul realizes his Lord (Ar. *rabb*) who is really his Supreme Self, he urges 'all' also to regain that Supremacy. Again, Eng, *all* is originally 'al' and in Arabic *al*, means 'definiteness', or rather defining 'a' who is indescribable, based on one's (memory of) past actions, but (as degraded human beings) they are to resign, negate, or forget their past deeds, that are nothing but *pāpa* (lit action of the 'soul' that bases itself on the vital plane), or *sin* or rather *seen* [Cf. Perso-Arabic letter *sin*, symbolic for human nature, Cf also Skt. *s(a)*, the Self], or only the experienced deeds (Cf. Beng. *abhi-jñā-tā*) that leads the human soul to realize the Re-al Self through the joy of *jñā-na*, that is inherent in every individual.

The word *lastu* is here really very significant. It means 'I am not', derived from the verb *laysa*, 'not to be' (always used in the perfect tense) Compare in this connection the word *astu*, used in Bengali, meaning 'let it be', as a benign order or a prayer, offered as a gift by one's superior. But it is only an abbreviation of the Skt. phrase '*Śivo* *ham aṣtu*', lit let it be, or let (my prayer) be permanently strengthening your be-ing (with the awareness that) 'I am the Lord *Śiva*', who as the ever-living Consciousness, sharpening (Cf the root verb *śi*, 'to lie, sharpen') the souls of all human beings, while lying inside or in the heart of every individual. This *Al-astu*, is again transformed into Persian having the symbol of *rūz-i alast*, 'the Day of the original covenant made between God and Man at the creation'. It is really the *nay-stān* (or *nī-stān*, or *laya-sthāna*)

of the supreme state of human self and by the forgetfulness of its original state, i.e., the Divinity of the Self, the human self is lamenting like the so-called ordinary beings. Referring to this fact the mystic Maulānā Rūmī thus begins his *Mathnavī* .

Bishnau az chih hikāyat mīkunad :

Az juḏāyihā shikāyat mī kunad.

Kaz nay-stān tā marā babrīda and ;

Az nafīram mard u zan nālīda and.

Nay, meaning, reed, is really here, signifying the striving soul, that is hankering after Realization, and *nafīr*, is the 'wind instrument', i.e., the song of the 'wise' describing the Divine State of the Man, *par excellence*

Rabb (rather *rabbu*, the exact form in Arabic) means, no doubt, the Lord, or Master. But figuratively it may also be compared to Skt. *rava*, sound, or the word as Logos. Again, the sound health with sound mind, i.e., the healing power of the vital self can only strengthen the mind, which, then hears the words of 'conscience' that reigns 'within', and is always prompting the sound (or rather the sound-ing) mind (Cf also Ar. *ṣabāb*, of three stringed instrument, or rather having three *gunas* or qualities of the Man or mind who thinks) to enliven itself with the Divine stage of humanity. We also know that the Semitic language has no letter like 'v', the semi-vowel, corresponding to the vowel 'u' or the consonant 'b'. Arabic language can only strengthen or intensify the meaning of 'b' into 'v' by using *tashdīd*, as we find here.

In fact, the *sandhi* of *u* and *a* has formed the letter *va*, whereas *a* with *u* makes its compressed pronunciation of 'o' (or its usual form *au*), but in Arabic for the purpose of connecting words, is used the letter *wāu*, which is really the combination of two vowel sounds with a *hamza* in their midst. Therefore in English the letter is called "double *u*". But mind that the 'W' is a consonant letter in Arabic pronounced with a *faṭḥa*, as *wa*. When any *hamza* is added before it with *faṭḥa* (and with *alif* as a prop), it is *a'w*, meaning 'or, unless'. But in Persian 'u' (with *alif* and *wau*) means 'he'; the combination of *a* and *u*, forming 'o' also means 'he' in Bengali, but it has also the meaning of 'and', which is thus to some extent of Arabic influence.

But if we go to their deeper meanings, it will only prove the same symbolic way of explaining their expressions.

'W' and 'Y' (along with *hamza*, which afterwards developed to *alif*) are also termed *ḥarūf-i illat*, "weak letters", along with *fatha kasra* and *ḍamma* that are 'purely' weak or defective sounds. Of these *y* (or *yā*) in Persian is called *yā-i tahtāniya*, an inferior type of sounds, that is placed below the consonant letters, as an effectation of their pronunciation. As *y* is pronounced with *i*, so also *w* and *hamza* with *u* and *a*.

The letter '*ain*' is a strong guttural sound in Arabic, and when its emphasis in the sound is lost, it is likened to *hamza*. It is really very difficult to pronounce this letter by a foreign tongue. And for this we find that even in the different Semitic languages there is often a confusion between *hamza* and '*ain*'. But taking a note of their distinction, in Bengali also it is always found to be pronounced as *ā* : as in the letter *āin* (for '*ain*') itself, or in other letters, such as, *mālum* (for *ma'lum*), known, *ārab* (for '*arabi*'), an Arabian, etc.

The letter '*ain*' is very difficult to pronounce, no doubt ; but in this staggering sound is found to be many mysteries about the origin of languages solved. In Bengali *āin* means law, or rather legal law, whereas in Arabic, exactly pronounced as '*ynu*' (with *a* for the prop'), it is meant for the spiritual law as revealed to the mental eye. '*Ain*' is there the symbol for 'Eye'. In Arabic, as well as in Persian, it has so many meanings, such as, Self, the source or foundation, sight, the thing or the essence of a thing itself, as in Persian '*ain-i kamāl*', the perfection itself. Compare also some of the Arabic phrases : *al-'ayānu*, the chief men, notables ; '*aynūl-yaqīn*', certain knowledge, or rather to be sure of the conviction (or certain belief that is in every individual) through experiment by vision of the Self (that is revealed everywhere) ; *hūa hūa 'ainuhu*. It is He himself. Says *Qāsim Kāhī*, court poet of the emperor *Humāyūn* and *Akbar*, in expounding the letter '*ain*' : '*ain-i 'Alī ast 'ayn-i Allāh ; 'arīfān 'ālim and na jahāl*' ("In the 'I' of 'Alī' is the eye of God—not I but the gnostics say this ; and they are wise not ignorant" : *Alif-nāma*, Introduction). Again says the Persian poet *Qā'ānī* : *Banīzīd-i ān kat az 'ain-i 'ayān binād nihān astī ; bapīsh-i ān kat az chashm-i nihān juyād 'ayān astī* (To him who sees Thee with the outer eye, Thou art

the same way as we find in Per. *chash-i-dan* -*Sy* - of Skt. is here changed to *-sh-* in Persian, both of which may be originally connected with the guttural Arabic letter 'h' (or *kh*), which has been afterwards changed to *-ks-* in Skt. This is, after all, only a way of analysing the different derivative elements of a word. But originally every letter had its distinctive characteristic. 'C' in Skt. as well as in Persian is only a defective palatal sound from an original guttural sound (which is generally connected with *k*, *ks*, or Eng. *x*) and here it may well be connected with Semitic 'or'. Besides as an individual letter 'C' signifies a seeking soul (based on *-a*); compare also Persian *ch-i-dan*, to pluck, or Beng. *c-ayan*, having the same significance. It may also be noted that no equivalent sound is found in the Semitic group of languages where 'j' is generally used instead, as in the Arabic influenced Persian verb, *jū-yad*, he seeks; compare also Skt. root *yu-*, to unite, already referred to, and the Arabic *jadda*, to seek (or he sought).

From *c(h)-i-dan* or *c-ayan* is derived, no doubt, the Hindi verb *c-an-nā*, or Beng. *c-ayan karā*; but if we note them particularly, they are really made doubly infinitives, and this is specially the skilfulness of the so-called gram-matic (lit. measuring in grams, with a physical view) scholars. Basically in *c-a* itself, we find an action or rather an impulsive force of 'a' (or rather *anuttara*). It is then made doubly active with a definite meaning of *c-an*, as an action of human impulse, and thus the formation of roots, with prefixes, and suffixes has gradually been developed, to make people understand the different special meanings of different words. By making different formations (cf. Beng. *bānān*, spelling: from root *b-an*, lit. to make a base, so that it may be understood by common mass, i.e., 'B'-type of people), we have in a sense made the language artistic or decorative, no doubt, but in other sense, the original meaning with fullness of its depth of each individual letter has gradually been lost, which must be found out, to realize that all languages are originally One and from it is thus developed the so many 'group' languages with their specialised artistic senses. As it is again continually developing by nursing the different dialects, so also we are deprived of its original grandeur, with its depth of meaning of the 'source'-language, which must not be neglected.

For, this will make Maṇ narrower and narrower, inspite of all its perfection of the artistic, narrow bent of Mind.

Caksu and *aksi* are cognate, no doubt ; and leaving aside the striving energy of the seeking soul (as implied in the letter 'c'), we find *aks-i*, added with 'i'. 'I' as an independent letter has the meaning of proceeding through, bringing down. In Arabic also as a suffix 'ī' or rather 'y', has the objective sense of 'I', i.e., of me, in me. Again, as in Beng, so in Skt., it means the subject 'I', as in (*āmi*) *kar-i*, 'I do'. Therefore, *aks-i*, from the root verb *aks* - would mean : the eye through which I see (the reflexive mood of mine - that is spread everywhere). 'Aks or 'aksu in Arabic (with ' instead of 'c' of *c-akṣu*) also means 'reflexion, inversion, or shadow' in Persian, commonly said to be derived from the root verb in Arabic, 'akasa, to reverse, invert. This *aks* or 'aks is surely connected with the English letter or word 'x' (or *eks*), meaning the first unknown quantity (or self), that is being reflected (cf. *x-rays*) everywhere through the inner self (*ra*), as the wheel (*ara*) of 'a' (or *anuttara*), i.e., *a-kṣ-a-ra*, commonly meaning a letter.

It may, here also be noted that as a symbol the letter 'r' (or *ra* or the Perso-Arabic *rā*) signifies really the inner self for which 'r' is often used as an abbreviation for 'right'. Really the 'right' of the inner self is only to get pleasure in surrendering itself (cf Vedic *rā*, 'give') from which is derived the Vedic word *rai*, meaning, wealth ; and its sing. acc. and pl. nom. case-endings are respectively *rām* (lit inner pleasure of the intuitive self) and *rāyas*, with which is surely connected our Beng. phrase *rai-rai*s, the rich or prosperous (cf. also Per *rāy-rāyān* or Ar. *ra'is*, chief) This *rai* is cognate with Eng. *ray* (or the rays of the Sun) which is really the 'radius' of the knowing Self (cf. *Jñāna-sūrya*) which is ever shining over the mental (or inner), as well in the physical, sphere of all 'beings' or things. Again, Per *rā* is said to be the contraction for either of the months *Rabī*, 'the season (or Ar. *mausim*), or the *va-santa-kāla* [lit the inner self, (the *ra*-or its more developed state) *va-* is on its onward development to the final stage of its 'saint'-hood, only to be *kāla*, dead or as long as the time (and space) endures]. *Rabī*, also, being connected with the months of *Ravi*, may be interpreted as : The spirit (cf. Ar. *rabb*) is entering the

House (cf. 'B' as the symbol for house, cf. again the Ar. *bait*, and Gr. *beta*) only to make itself aware that 'He is the same as he' (or 'I') as roaming in the physical world ; and that 'I' is to re-gain or realize itself only by the death of its physical or mental motives.

From *akṣi* is derived our Beng *ākh*, *ākh-i*, meaning, the eye (with a nasal sound in 'ā', which shows its original connection with the letter 'ain) with an alliance-towards the stiffer guttural sound. The *akṣi* or *āṅkhu* will thus literally mean : A (or the 'eye' of the Self with pleasure in itself, and) resting on the supreme plane with its higher self (cf. *kh-a*) is yet ever dynamic on its usual process of going through the mundane world from 'k' to 'ṣ' and always on its look-out either to destroy or protect them, all of whom is nothing but the objective selves of his revolutionary circle as it appears in the spiritual vision of 'I' (or *aham*).

Only our traditional interpretations of any word through roots with the help of prefixes and suffixes, have made us unaware of the depth of much more wider significances of any word. Take for example the word *aśoka*, one who is without *śok*, grief. The prefix *a-* is, here, ordinarily taken with a negative sense ; but it is not really so. It is the all-absorbing *anuttara* residing in the inner self to shatter away (cf Ar. *shaqqa*) all physical senses that are causes of all griefs, and thus makes us understand his true nature ; i e., one who is with all griefs, yet always surpassing them [i. e., *a* (or *anuttara* ;) and is thus an *answer* to all complexities of the mystery of birth and death, (or rather a fulfilment of) the 'swear' (or 'ahd, promise, made on the Day of *al-ast*, as already referred to), or one in unison (cf. Ar. verb, *ahhada*, to unify) with *anuttara*, who is really the *Aham*, the Seer, the Sight, and the Seen, in One, who is the *hamza*, 'ain', 'h', 'ḥ', and 'h' in one line with 'M'; for, He is the *rasa vai saḥ*, It is all 'Love'). He is really the 'āshiq, the true Lover, who is always with *ma'shūq*, the 'Be-love-d', i e., with all *shauq*, desire, or longings, yet beyond them all. Therefore only a released person, who is beyond all *śoka*, can sing like the mystic poet *Maulānā Rūmī* :

"Jumla ma'shūq ast u 'āshiq parda'i ,
Zinda ma'sūq ast u 'āshiq murda'ī".

It is the 'Be-love-d' that remains, and the lover only a shadow; the Beloved is only the living one, and the lover is (already) dead (or one who is of the attribute of an ordinary man, cf. Per. *mard* and Skt. *mṛta*).

In connection with the letter 'āin, or 'eye', we refer here another Beng word *locan* with its magnifying adjective *āyata*. *Āyata locana* generally means in Bengali an extended eye (whose angle of eye-sight is proceeding up to the ears, Beng *kān* or *karna*). *Locan* is, no doubt, cognate with Eng. *look-on*, and *āyata* may, in the same way, be connected with Eng. 'eye-d'; again as 'k' is often changed to 'c', we may philologically change *locan* to 'lok-an', i. e., humanising action of the common mass (*lok*, meaning, 'people' in Beng.) *Lok* or *loka* also means the different worlds, such as *candra-lok*, vision of the Mind; *sūrya-lok*, the sphere of the Sun, i. e., the most developed stage of the knowing Self, from where it is ever looking on; and *sapta-loka*, i. e., the seven stages of the *tṛdhā*, or holding the three (sided anglic vision) of 'a' (or *anuttara*), who is with four frontages or *catur-mukha*, the *Brahmā*, who is, again, in all pleasure, being absorbed in *Brahma*, the Magnificence of the Self, that is only circling (cf. Skt. *vr-*) round *aham*.

The 'ā' in *āyata* is a union of '('āin) with 'a', i. e., the joyous 'eye' of *anuttara*, who is descending down (i) to the physical world, from where in its vital plane it is transgressing its position (y) to 'a' and there in its mental stage, it has again become a past action (cf. *ta*) to review the higher *lokas*, as already referred to.

The particle *āya* in *āyata* may also be interpreted likewise, *Āy* in Bengali means 'income' (and outcome of the *Man*, i. e., ingoing and outgoing of the Self from animal and vital plane to the mental stage). Here the Arabic 'ayyu, cognate with our *āyu* (i. e., the limited period of the life of a common, ordinary man), comes to our help in interpreting its inner significance. 'Ayyu, in Arabic means 'weak' (or the sluggish sight of the mental vision that bars our spiritual progress) of 'a (or 'āin) absorbed in thoughts of the selfish 'I', considering only in terms of me or mine. But when free of these absolute selfish look-out, 'ayyu becomes 'ayyanu, meaning 'weak-minded', or Beng. *hina-manyā*; and thus it is made equivalent to our 'Āyān', the

hero of the *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa* episode, commonly said to be cognate with Skt. *abhi-manyu*, i. e., quality of the Man that is proceeding to find out his real human (Cf. Skt *su-mana*) qualities.

But if any Life, without proceeding further to its mental or spiritual plane, extends itself only to its physical stature, it becomes *āyatan*, the broad view of mind, which is really of four varied states, has at last limited itself to its mental stage. And thinking it sufficient, we find the Hindu devotees of God (or *ghaṭa*), worship the *Nārāyan-śilā* or *Śiva-linga*, a round piece of stone, as a symbol for their Idol, being placed on a square area, *āyatana*, which should make their view refreshed with wider grasp of mind, proceeding to further spiritual progress. Again, in Bengali we use a word *āyatī*, a sign or symbol, placed on the forehead of his new-bride (at the time of marriage) by her husband as a proof (or sign) that she is alive with her husband. But really it signifies that the husband (or *svāmi*) has Himself opened for her the spiritual vision which would from now (i. e., with their spiritual union, which is nothing but joy and 'marry'-ment or pure merriment of the type of 'Mary') function in her spiritual progress to be of one soul, in body, mind and spirit with her *Svāmi* (who is really the Self that works in 'I') The third eye that is put on the Hindu Goddess (or *Devī*, who is *tri-nayanā*) is also of this same significance. Thus *āyata locana* may be translated in English "the four dimensional glimpse of the eyes that ever look-on". And without proceeding further on the deep meanings of *Śiva-linga* or *Nāra-ayan śilā*, we conclude with a quotation full of deeper meanings made by Paul Bruton, "Einstein has upset the conservative views of time which once prevailed. He has demonstrated mathematically that some one able to take a four-dimensional glimpse of things will have a very different sense of past and present from that which man ordinarily enjoys. This may help one to understand the possibility that Nature keeps a perfect harmony of the past in which are perpetuated the pictures of vanished centuries (*A Search in Secret Egypt*, p. 229).

Hina-manya and *abhi-manyu* are not again really of same significance. *Abhi-manyu* is a type character, as referred to in the *Mahābhārata*, that knows how to fight in the conflicts of mental affairs standing on its vital plane, which is only a start

or an entrance to the spiritual plane ; but it does not know how to come out victorious from the intermingling conflicts of vital mixed with mental affairs. *Hina-manya*, commonly meaning a man of low mentality, really signifies : a transgressing state of the mind, aimed at higher spiritual progress, is for the time being engrossing the higher impulses of the Self to ordinary mental thoughts.

The '(or 'ain) of Arabic and 'y' (without any vowel as a prefix or suffix in it) of Bengali is really of same significance, as expressed in the letter 'y' of *manya*, which is again added to *hina* to express almost the same meaning. *Hin* - or rather *hina-manā*, a substitute for *manya*, will only show respect or *mān* to those higher than himself. And from this *mān* is derived the Beng verb *mān-ā*. But in the phrase *māne nā mānā*, commonly meaning, 'he (or they) does not respect any prohibition (of any religious regulation) : *mānā* (or *manā*), here, is said to be borrowed from Ar. *man'u* (with *u*, pronounced in Beng. as *a*, without knowing the subtler meaning of the letter *u*), meaning 'prevention'. The Arabic *manu'* is connected with its verb *mana'a*, to refuse, prohibit ; or *manu'a*, to be inaccessible. Taking note of the subtler meanings of *fatha* and *ḍamma* (or *pish*), the deeper meanings of *manu* and *manuya* in Bengali are more vivid. *Manu* is said to be our ancestral originator, from which the word *mānava* (or human beings) is derived. *Manu* is our ancestral Father, no doubt, as taken in its physical sense ; but it is really of spiritual significance. *Manu* is really a mental stage of a *man*, whose further development to higher stages of life, is obscured or rather prevented by its narrow outlook of the Mind, which must be fulfilled by its spiritual inheritors, *Mānava*, the real *uttara-adhikāri*, of a *man*, engrossed only with its mental attitudes. Again, *manuyā* means that nature of a man, who has transgressed all mental ambitions of life, and is ever joyful with the bliss of his spiritual existence. We all, as human beings, are really born as an *uttara* (to be further developed to *uttama*) or an *answer* to the 's-wear' to be complied with, by perfectly justifying our birth-right, the *humanity*, *insāniyat*, or the mature state of an *Ādam*, which in Arabic is *adamiyyu*, commonly known as *admi*, by being non-existent (Cf. Ar. 'adamu : from the verb 'adima) of the primitive features of the Mind, as rooted in our original (or Beng. *adim*) nature of a Man.

What is left of a man, as hereditary from generation to generation, is not his body or the physical nature of the mind, but the higher mental qualities, by wearing (Cf. Eng. *s-wear*) which the *uttarādhikārī* is to develop further (cf. *ut-tara*) his mental or human (cf. *su-man*) nature which should be all full of perfumes (cf. Ar. *ʾiṭru*, pl. *aʾṭaru*), and with these perfumed qualities, he is to transgress all *guṇa* or *nir-guṇa*, which is his *uttariya*-nature spread all mankind, but alas for that human soul, 'who without holding up this *uttariya*, is vainly in pursuit of gross desires of the mundane world' Accordingly sings Rabīndranāth through his mouthpiece of *Ṭhākurdā* to make us understand what does the immortal soul, symbolised by his drama, entitled *Arūpratan*, the Gem with no form, really means, thus :

“*Āṇi dakhun duyār kholā*

... ..

Tomār utalā uttariya

Tumī ākāṣe urāye dīyo,

Esohe, esohe, esohe āmār

Vasanta eso”.

This (‘auspicious’) Day, the right-most (*dakṣ-in*) Gate (or Frontage of an *uttara*), is open to (welcome my *vasanta*) ... let you spread over the horizons (cf. *harijan*) your *uttariya*, the wear (and tear) of your un-restricted (*utalā*) heritage, having no barrier (and continually resonant in tune with the Dance of *Śiva*). I welcome you, my everjoyous ‘Spring’ that flows through time and space till its end in the ever-living soul of the good Self. I welcome you a-gain (with all gain, derived from the *Uttariya*). The word ‘*eso*’ (*a-i-sa-u*) may also be interpreted thus : *Anuttara* is coming down to the Self (i.e., enlightened self) who is now being one with his Origin is thus realizing his identity that he is one with all (cf. Eng. *so and so*) *Eso* may again be cognate with Vedic *astu*, ‘let it be, whereas in Beng. meaning, ‘let you come’ (cf. the root verb *as* and Eng. be-come). Cf. also Beng. *urnā*, *ornā* or *udanī* for *uttariya*, that which is to fly only in the ‘air’ or airy region free from (cf. Ar *uryān*) or ‘naked’ of all earthly atmosphere. Again, *ornā* is said to be from Skt. *ūrna-nābha*, commonly meaning ‘spider, but really the splendrous Light (*bha*) of the joy of human beings that is spread to the sky (cf. *nabha*), being free of the transgressing state of the earthly

atmosphere (as a forced *sandhi* or combination of *a* and *u* : Cf. also Ar. 'ūd', aloe-wood, and 'aud', returning).

Though *a-varṇa* is beyond description, yet it is 'an *uttara*' of its own Self. When the *Re-al-ity* of one's own Self is found out, then only the different meanings of the letters, both of Semitic and Aryan, can be truly understood; and is not in antagonism, but in finding out where the symmetry lies between them. In my 'Four States of the Mind' I tried to find out the symbolic meanings of some of the letters, as described by the *Bāul*-poet *Lālan*. There I have referred to some quotations of the mystic poet, such as, "As *alif* hides Himself in *lām*, so the *Sāin* (from Skt. *svāmī*) is residing in all beings (*lāme ālef lukāy yeman, Mānuse sāṁ āche teman*)". Or, "The body of *lā-ilāha* (there is no god) and the Life *illa-Allāh* (except the one God) are in the union of Love (with two souls). Says the *Faqīr Lālan*, where will you go, O Mind, to-day forgetting the Self of your own self". By becoming forgetful of our animal and vital self, we may regain our higher stages of mental life; but again we are to be forgetful of our mental stages, so that we may realize our true Identity where *aham*, as *a-varṇa*, is in same line with, 'a', 'h', *h*, and *h*, and our "Divine Play" is only to finding out the Re-al Self in us, through our joyous enjoyments in the "Night" (cf. Ar *laylu*, or *laylatu*) of our apparent Existence, which is the "*Lilā*", or the Love-episode of the Lover and the Beloved, and when the play comes to an "End" (which has really no 'end', but only an 'and' or addition to the joy of "Bliss" of "A" (with a *madd*, or Skt "Ān-and-am"), it is the "Splendrous Day" (of the Realization of One's Own Identity) that is *Anuttara* who is the "*Lā ilāha illā-Allāh*".

In conclusion, I like to say in the words of *Radindranāth*, "*Satya nīrav, kalpanāi mukharā. Satya ghatanā bhavasrotke pātharer mato cāpiyā thāke, kalpanāi tāhāi path mukta kariyā dey*" ("Truth is silent, and it is imagination only which waxes eloquent. Reality represses the flow of feeling like a rock, imagination cuts out a path for itself"). In the same way the proper Arabic letters are, as if, the Rock of Truth, and the worlds of eloquent pieces of so many physical (and mental) "weak letters" are curving out the Truth from the midst to flow on to be united again to the Truth, the One *Anuttara*, or the letter 'A' (or *a-varṇa*),

which is "unknown and unknowable" to the Semitic world" but is ever-known and ever-living to the "Aryan world", and that is the *Śivo'ham astu*, the ever dynamic, and yet ever static amalgamation of *Sivam*, *Satyam*, and *Sundaram* (or "It is all Beauty, Truth and Bliss") and it is ever enjoyed by the Self that is 'my' *ānandarūpam* (i.e., the world is my 'Joy' spread all around).

ISLAM AND ASPECTS OF MODERNITY IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

ASIM ROY

In its transition to modernity the Indian subcontinent has to contend, naturally enough, with Islam and the Muslims. There is, however, a qualitative difference between the part that Islam played in the time before the partition and that following it. An adequate understanding of the problems of Islam bearing on modernity in India and Pakistan demands an appreciation of this difference.

I

Generally speaking, Islam in the subcontinent as elsewhere in the Muslim world was challenged, in its pre-partition phase, with the task of defending and sustaining the Muslim community against what the believers themselves saw as a crisis—within and without the community. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Muslim world was in a ferment, agitated internally by a sense of communal deterioration attributed to religious decay and degeneration, and externally by the disruptive ideological and political challenges of the west.¹

The Muslim concern stemmed from the basic Muslim view of the relationship between the religious-social ideals of Islam and their actualisation in History. The Muslims, lacking an institutionalised church, tended to identify the community with the state as the embodiment of its ideals and aspirations. The fact that realisation of the ideal in history remained questionable did not finally matter to the believers as long as they could afford the complacency of living in a 'Muslim' state in the sense of being presided by a 'Muslim' ruler, who was not often quite 'Islamic' in his private and public conduct and posture.²

1. Smith, W. Cantwell. *Islam in Modern History*, Princeton, 1957, p. 47.
2. The history of the subcontinent throws up at least two clear instances of direct intervention by Muslim religious leaders to smother prospects of non-Muslim political hegemony. Cf. the rise of Rāja Ganes during

The British occupation of India, as general European aggrandizements at the expense of other Muslim countries, such as Turkey, Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Persia and Indonesia, struck at the basis of this Muslim complacency and created a disconcerting chasm between a Muslim's faith and his social ideal. The sense of desperation and crisis was deepened by more subtle and pervasive ideological forces of the west, confronting the Muslims and other traditional societies, in the forms of rationalism, positivism, liberalism, utilitarianism, evangelism and nationalism.

The Muslim response in the face of this new challenge followed two broad trends: one relatively simple, populist and collectivist, and the other more sophisticated, intellectual and individualistic, the divergent patterns stemming from their respective social compositions. As at once an explanation and an answer to the growing sense of retardation and impotency in the face of the new challenges of the time, both the populist and the elitist Muslim responses, turning inwardly, resorted to the golden age formula, underlining thereby the notion of deviations and degenerations in historical Islam. Implicit in this idea was the concern for purification of the faith and the revival of the pristine purity of Islam. Turning outwardly, the populist responsive movements, such as the so-called Wahabbī and the Farāīzī, sought abortive political-military solutions through militant resistance. The more sophisticated Muslim response in this regard took the form of intellectual defence, vindication and rehabilitation of Islam as an adequate system in the eyes of its modernist external critics and its own small potentially disruptive coterie of alienated westernised youth. The dominant strain in this intellectual posture was apologetic. The bulk of the modern Muslim responsive writings of this nature in India is characteristically of apologist quality.

In historical retrospect the Muslim intelligentsia, unlike its Hindu counterparts, confronted with basically similar challenges, would seem to have failed to discharge a creative function

the Ilyās Shāhī period in Bengal in the 14th century and the role of the *Sūfī* Shaikh Nūr Quṭb 'Alam in supplanting him; also, the great Muslim religious leader, Shāh Wali Allāh's letters seeking outside intervention of the Afghan ruler against the steadily mounting threat of Maratha supremacy in Delhi in mid-18th century (the third battle of Panipat, 1761).

in leading their community in its transition to modernity. Paradoxically enough, the bulk of the Hindu intelligentsia resorted to the golden age or classical model with a view not to reviving the past but as a rationalization for change in social and religious reforms. The subversive role of classicism, as also illustrated in the European Reformation and Martin Luther's return to primitive Christianity,³ is often inadequately comprehended. The use of reason by the Muslim apologists in defending revelation did not strengthen the position of liberalism in Islam as a religious system. The central and fundamental theological affirmations of Islam were not subjected to creative re-interpretations in India as elsewhere in the Muslim world.⁴ Islamic liberalism at its best offered solution at the individual and not collective level, intelligible and acceptable to the community. Even the close confidants of Saiyid Ahmad Khān, while fully endorsing his educational and political concerns, disapproved of his religious ideas. As a natural consequence of this dichotomous situation the Muslim modernisers in India were unable to integrate modern non-religious education with traditional Islamic learning—the two flowing into separate and mutually exclusive channels. A student in the Aligarh College received his religious education in a traditional centre, curiously attached to the college. The progress of Islamic modernism in the subcontinent remained largely caught up in this unreconciled position between traditional Islamic religious and modern secular ethos and between its religious leadership and modernizers.

The social dichotomy between traditional Muslim religious leadership holding allegiance of the masses and the non-religious western educated Muslim elite aspiring for political leadership of the community affected the course of subsequent developments involving the Muslims of the sub-continent. The Muslim League, almost totally drawn from the rank of non-religious elites found its development and expansion inhibited at two levels. First, the

3. Caudwell, C. *Studies in a Dying Culture*, London, 1938, pp 27-8; also R. Pascal, *The Social Basis of German Reformation*, London, 1933, v.

4. See D. S. Franck, ed., *Islam in the Modern World*, Washington, 1951, *passim*, N. Richard Frye, ed., *Islam and the West*, 's-Gravenhage, 1957, *passim*, also Smith, *op. cit.*, Ch. 2.

mass-based Muslim religious leadership (e. g. of Deoband), distrustful of the 'westernised' political élites, was opposed to the use of Islam as the focus of a political party, likely to prove detrimental to the interests of Islam as a proselytising religion in the subcontinent. Secondly, the provincial Muslim politicians in the Muslim majority provinces, especially Punjab and Bengal, refused to share the Muslim League's staunch separatist position and preferred to maintain greater range of policy options giving high priority to political partnership and legislative coalitions as conditions for ministerial stability. In its attempt to extend the political base to the masses since 1937 and to undercut the 'provincial' leadership, the central or 'national' Muslim political leadership of the League started to make heavily growing use of religious symbols and to politicize religion. The League resorted to establishing a Masha'ikh Committee of twelve, consisting of some influential Muslim '*ulamā*' and *pirs*, and employed them to political objectives.⁵ The creation of Pakistan is the measure of success of the political élite in directing religion into a political channel and in apparently throwing a bridge across the gulf between the political and religious segments of the Muslim leadership.

But in the process the creators of Pakistan generated forces and conditions, which the rulers of the newly created state found baffling, disruptive and uncontrollable. In the cry for a separate homeland for the Muslims, the political leaders had touched and roused the deepest urge in the Muslim mind—the longing for an Islamic state, the rationale of a Muslim's social existence. In Pakistan something more than a mere Muslim state had come into existence. A 'Muslim' state created for the Muslims was an immediate reality as early as its creation, but to call it 'Islamic' was not quite the same thing. The leaders of Pakistan were left to work out through extreme confusions and conflicts the full implications of moulding a Muslim State into an Islamic one. The Muslims in India, on the other hand, placed under a secular constitutional system, found problems of different nature and dimension to contend with.

5. Sayeed, K. B. 'Islam and National Integration of Pakistan' in D. E. Smith, *South Asian Politics and Religion*, Princeton, 1969, p. 405.

II

The creation of Pakistan polarized further the political and religious leaders in the society. Before long the modernising élites of Pakistan were caught up in a dilemma for the creation of which a large share of responsibility rests squarely on their own shoulders. As noted above, the political pressures and circumstances jettisoning religion and politics by the Muslim League particularly since 1937, and the extensive use of religious symbols backed by no attempt to clearly define their political implications, created situations to which the rulers of Pakistan were the natural heirs. The achievement of political freedom vested the political leaders with the inescapable responsibility for the fulfilment of the Islamic aspirations of the religious leadership and the masses of the people.⁶ Whereas the rulers of Pakistan found before themselves the onerous task of building up the infra-structure of a viable state—a state that, apart from being a geographical monstrosity in its two extremities, West and East, with an intervening 1000 miles of alien Indian territory, comprised peoples of distinct linguistic-cultural divisions, whose only bond of unity seemed profession of a common faith.

In the face of this dilemma Pakistani modernisers have naturally tended to vacillate and contradict. Liaqat 'Alī Khān, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan declared in the constituent Assembly of Pakistan in March, 1949: "Pakistan was founded because the Muslims of the sub-continent wanted to build up their lives in accordance with the teachings and traditions of Islam."⁷

Others have revealed a tendency to play down the religious content of the Pakistan movement. Four days before the birth of Pakistan, Jinnāh's presidential address to the Constituent Assembly

6. Poignantly illustrative of this confusion in the popular mind is the anecdote that Jinnāh, the doyen of the 'westernised' Muslims in the Indian subcontinent, was greeted by the rural folks of Sind with 'Long Live Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī Jinnāh'. Jinnāh is said to have taken the trouble of making them able to distinguish between political and religious leadership. (H. Bolitho, *Jinnah, Creator of Pakistan*, London, 1954, p. 213).

7. *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, Vol. V, no. 1, March 7, 1949, p. 2.

of Pakistan could have left the champions of Islamic state in Pakistan nothing but uneasy: "You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State... You will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State".⁸

The same attitude is reflected in the following remark of Muhammad Munir, a former chief justice of Pakistan "The present argument that Pakistan was demanded in order to enable or compel the Muslims to lead their lives in accordance with the injunctions of Islam was then [referring to 1947] in nobody's mind. The transcendental had not yet been lowered into a common place and the Holy Book and Tradition had not been converted into a potent weapon of the politicians, though implicit in the demand had been the hope that Pakistan would provide a favourable ground for experimentation in Muslim social and political doctrines."⁹

Governor General Iskandār Mirzā put it rather bluntly that religion and politics do not mix. President 'Ayūb Khān adopted a more cautious line of harassing those two elements to the chariot of his paternalistic rule and warned Muslims against being trapped by people who, in the garb of religion, were trying to achieve political power.¹⁰ Two months later on January 6, 1964, he cracked down on the Jamā'at-i-Islāmī, the orthodox fundamentalist party, declared it illegal and arrested its leaders including Mawlānā Mawdudī on the ground of its carrying on 'subversive activities against the state' and constituting 'a danger to the public peace'.¹¹ A writ petition challenging the government's action in declaring the party illegal was dismissed by the

8 *ibid* Vol 1, no 2, August 11, 1947, p 20.

9 "Days to Remember", *Pakistan Times*, June 23, 1964.

10 *Muslim News International*, Karachi, November, 1963, p. 8.

11. *Pakistan Times*, June 18, 1964

High Court. 'An Islamic constitution', said 'Ayūb on one occasion, 'did not mean that the Pakistani nation should revert to backwardness. Islam is a progressive religion and a religion for all times and people'.¹² On another occasion he remarked that if being a Muslim meant going back to the world of 1,300 years ago, then he was not for being a Muslim.¹³

The Muslim political leaders have evidently chosen to exercise much greater realism and circumspection in dealing with the religious forces in Pakistan than in the pre-partition India. And yet the complexities facing the Pakistani political élite stem from the fact that howsoever onerous the undertaking of building an Islamic society may prove to be, they cannot easily evade it. This is for several reasons. First, they are tied to their own commitments in the past and the inherent logic of the two-nation theory and the partition, as noted above. Secondly the recognition of inadmissibility of Islamic political ideals implies more than their own failure or the failure of the Pakistanis as a people to implement them. It may also be interpreted as Islamic ideals being 'irrelevant or unequal to the task of contemporary living'.¹⁴ Thirdly, the failure of the modernisers would strengthen the position of the religious orthodoxy against the so-called 'westernisers'. The spectre of the religionists acquiring political power haunted the political élite from the beginning and this has, in a very large measure, been responsible for the collapse of democratic experiments in Pakistan. Finally, Pakistan, or for that matter no state, can live in a vacuum. Islamic or not, some ideology has got to be evolved to sustain Pakistan. The prospect for an ideological alternative to the Islamic has not so far appeared quite bright.

Modernisation in Pakistan has therefore tried carefully to adopt a practicable frame of reference in Islamic terms. For the modernisers did not take long to realise that the viability of Pakistan without some Islamic substance was as doubtful as that on the basis of Islam. To work out a harmonious relation between the demands of a modern state and those of a religion has

12. *Pakistan Observer*, January 26, 1960

13. Abbott, F. *Islam and Pakistan*, New York, 1968, p. 197.

14. Smith, W. Cantwell. *op. cit.*, p. 297.

been the despair of Pakistan since her emergence. The difficulty is further accentuated by a complete lack of consensus regarding the principles or ideals of the 'Islamic state'. There were possibly as many definitions as persons wishing to offer them.

The Pakistani rulers preferred a liberal interpretation of Islam without any attempt at a clear analysis of the same. Central to this approach is the conviction that religion and science are not mutually exclusive. Opposed to the traditionalist view that it is not interpretations of Islam, but concepts of the contemporary world that must change, the modernists, believing in the innate consistency between the forces of modernity and the spirit of Islam, would like to make Islamic laws applicable to modern conditions. They urge a distinction between the 'form' and 'essence' of the religion to preserve the 'abiding values' in Islam.¹⁵

This particular approach raises again more questions than it answers. How does one determine an abiding value in Islam? Who decides which are abiding values? Should it be individuals who are little learned in the Qur'an and *hadith*, or those who all their lives have been studying nothing else? Men of consequence in Pakistan have desperately and vainly sought to answer such questions since the country's inception, and in the process generated social and political tensions and turmoils of gigantic proportions to which the whole Pakistani history bears witness.

15 Zahid Hussain, President of the Pakistan Economic Association, and Chairman of the Government Planning Board, maintained in an address to the Economic Association that the belief that Islam provided a complete code of conduct must rest on 'our ability to distinguish clearly between beliefs, traditions and institutions which are of abiding value from age to age and those that serve only ephemeral purposes and must change to meet changing conditions. Islamic institutions and traditions of abiding value must be preserved.' (Association meeting at Peshwar, January 11, 1955, *Pakistan Standard*, January 16, 1955)

Fazlur Rahmān, the well-known Director of the Central Institute of Islamic Research established under the Constitution of 1962, noted: 'The Muslim liberal on whose shoulders fell the main burden of framing an Islamic Constitution, rightly felt that Islam possessed an inherent ability to express itself in fresh forms consonant with the needs of the age. Islam, thus possesses inherently the capacity to reformulate its ideals in new forms' (Fazlur Rahman "An Islamic State", *Times*, London, August 14, 1963).

III

The early stage of Pakistan, dominated by the towering figures of Jinnāh and Liāqat 'Alī Khān, witnessed great political support enjoyed by the leaders, whose primary preoccupations were to build the political and administrative framework of the new state. The question of the Islamic nature of the state could not have been brushed aside. Mawlānā Shabbīr Ahmad Usmānī, the most distinguished of the Pakistani 'ulamā' and the founder of the Jam'iyat al-'ulamā'-ī Islām, and Mawlānā Māwdudī, the fundamentalist orthodox founder of the Jamā'at-ī Islāmī pressed on the issue. Qu'aid-e-'Azam Jinnāh set the general tone for the political leadership of Pakistan with the remarks: "I cannot understand why this feeling of nervousness that the future constitution of Pakistan is going to be in conflict with Shariat Law? There is one section of the people who keep on impressing everybody that the future constitution should be based on the Shariat. The other section deliberately want to create mischief and agitate that the Shariat Law must be scrapped."¹⁶

In March 1949 the Objective Resolution was moved in the Constituent Assembly by the Prime Minister Liāqat 'Alī Khān. It declared that 'sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to God Almighty alone,' but He had delegated this authority to the state of Pakistan and that this was to be exercised through its people 'within the limits prescribed by Him.' The resolution also stated that (a) 'the state shall exercise its power and authority through the chosen representatives of the people', (b) 'the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed' (c) 'the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah.'¹⁷

In February 1949 'Usmānī demanded the appointment of a committee consisting of eminent 'ulamā' and thinkers to advise the Constituent Assembly on the requirements of an Islamic constitution.¹⁸ This demand was met a few months later when the

16. *Dawn*, Karachi, January 26, 1948.

17. *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, 1949, Vol. V, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2

18. Presidential Address at Dacca Conference, 1949, p. 52.

Constituent Assembly's Basic Principles Committee appointed a Board of *Talimat-i Islāmiyya* (Islamic Teaching). It recommended that the Head of the State should be a Muslim, with ultimate power, that government should be run by an élite of pious Muslims chosen for their piety by the Muslim electorate; that the committee of '*ulamā*' should decide what legislation was repugnant to the injunctions of the Qur'ān and the *sunna* and was therefore invalid, that a Legislative Assembly, which they identified with the Islamic—in fact ancient Arabian—*shūrā*, or tribal consultative assembly, should be empowered to demand the resignation of the Head of the State in certain circumstances. Most of the Board's recommendations were turned down by the Basic Principles Committee of the Constituent Assembly, but they left a considerable imprint on Pakistan's first (1956) and second (1962) constitutions.

After Jinnāh's death, Liāqat followed the same line under a slightly thicker Islamic veneer. This was reflected in the Interim Report of the Basic Principles Committee in 1950, which referred only nominally to the *shari'at* provisions. A conference of '*ulamā*' was held in January 1951 at which they were to agree on a series of amendments to the Interim Report. At this conference the fundamentalist Mawdudī joined hands with the secretary of the *Talimat* Board to outline twenty-two principles which were adopted as the basis of an Islamic constitution.

The assassination of Liāqat in 1951 marked a significant alteration in the balance between political and religious forces in Pakistan. His successor, Khwāja Nazimuddīn and the finance minister (later Prime minister) Chaudhrī Muhammad 'Alī, both susceptible to religious influences, allowed the religionists to consolidate their position quite rapidly. Extra-religious issues like the possible form of the federal structure and the parity among the constituent state units contributed to the failure of the politicians. Muslim League was routed in the East Pakistan election of 1953. And the religious orthodoxy chose to throw its gauntlet at the government in the same year. This has reference to the fierce Punjab disturbance, in fact, a vast heresy hunt. Many thousands of citizens, with extremely wide support throughout the province, rioted murderously against the dissident sect of Ahmadīs and against the government for not declaring these to be relig-

iously and politically outside the pale. For the government the issue was more than one of law and order. It involved an interpretation of Islamic government—its attitudes toward denominational minority among Muslims. Before this the government had already betrayed its mind. Censorship, for instance, was imposed on a biography of Āishah, the Prophet's wife, because it was objectionable to the sunnī, although there was nothing in the book to which a shī'ah would object. Similarly, when Life magazine, in reply to a letter from a reader, published a small reproduction of a shī'ah painting of Muhammad, the offending picture was removed from every copy sold in Pakistan. The shī'ahs were the minority, and where public order seemed to be threatened, were treated like a minority. The majority, now on the Ahmadi issue, perhaps expected the same result. The government however refused to accede to their demands reiterating that the Ahmadīs or any other sect could not be declared a minority community if it chose to call itself Muslim and that they could not and would not be removed from any key posts they held in the state. The ugly episode had been fully investigated and the results incorporated in an illuminating report popularly known as the Munir Report. The Report squarely faces the dilemma of the concept of an 'Islamic state' in modern times. If it is an Islamic state as defined by the 'ulamā' or the fundamentalists, it cannot be democratic in the modern sense. Technically it cannot be sovereign either, if sovereignty is vested in God. "Absolute restriction on the legislative power of a State is a restriction on the sovereignty of the people of that State and if the origin of this restriction lies elsewhere than in the will of the people, then to the extent of that restriction the sovereignty of the State and its people is necessarily taken away"¹⁹

In diagnosing the source of the malaise, the Report pointed at the Pakistani Muslim who found himself "standing on the crossroads, wrapped in the mantle of the past and with the dead weight of centuries on his back, frustrated and

19 *Report of the Court of Inquiry constituted under Punjab Act II of 1954 to enquire into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953 (Munir report)*, Lahore, 1954, p 210

bewildered and hesitant to turn one corner or the other It is this lack of bold and clear thinking, the inability to understand and take decision which has brought about in Pakistan a confusion which will persist and repeatedly create situations of the kind we have been inquiring into until our leaders have a clear conception of the goal and of the means to reach it" ²⁰

It concludes "Opposing principles, if left to themselves, can only produce confusion and disorder, and the application of a neutralizing agency to them can only produce a dead result. And as long as we rely on the hammer when a file is needed and press Islam into service to solve situations it was never intended to solve, frustration and disappointment must dog our steps. The sublime faith called Islam will live even if our leaders are not there to enforce it. It lives in the individual, in his soul and outlook, in all his relations with God and men, from the cradle to the grave, and our politicians should understand that if Divine commands cannot make or keep man a Musalman, their statutes will not." ²¹

The second Constituent Assembly passed the first constitution of Pakistan in 1956. Except of some interesting verbal changes the Objective Resolution is repeated, substantially intact, as the preamble to the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. There were two clauses containing Islamic provisions. Clause 204 envisaged the formation of an Institute of Islamic Research to 'assist in the reconstruction of Muslim society on a truly Islamic basis', and the right of parliament to legislate for the collection of *zakāt* (poor-tax) from Muslims. Clause 205 made the greatest concession, not only to the traditionalists but to the Mawdudī group as well, in reiterating that a commission would be appointed to see not merely that no legislation was passed which would be repugnant to the Qur'ān and the *sunna*, but also that all existing laws should be revised in their light. It is not

20. *ibid*, p 232.

21. *ibid*

surprising that this constitution received the qualified approval of Mawdudī. It, however, firmly held to the principle of complete equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, the only disqualification for the latter being that only a Muslim could be appointed Head of State.

The second Constituent Assembly and the First Constitution were swept away by the political anarchy, and the martial law was proclaimed. President Iskandār Mirzā changed the name of the state by ordinance to the Republic of Pakistan, dropping the Islamic epithet. A few months later Mirzā himself was replaced by General 'Ayūb Khān whose attitudes towards the question of Islamic state have already been noted above.

Following a cautious policy with regard to modernity and Islam, the military regime of 'Ayūb Khan addressed itself to a few significant undertakings including the usual one of a constitution. In its Preamble the new constitution retained the formula of the old, in acknowledging the sovereignty of Allāh over the entire universe, but changed the rest of the formula to 'the authority exercisable by the people is a sacred trust'. This subtle change was based on the implication that man in general, and not the Pakistani Muslim in particular, is God's vicegerent on earth. The new constitution also retained the name of the state as the 'Republic of Pakistan, dropping the adjective 'Islamic'.

As a principle of legislation it laid down that 'no law should be repugnant to Islam'. The Part X of the constitution provided for two basic Islamic institutions to advise Islamic orientations in governmental law and policy. The first of these was an Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology, 'to make recommendations to the Central Government and the Provincial Governments as to means of enabling and encouraging the Muslims of Pakistan to order their lives in all respects in accordance with the principles and concepts of Islam'. The Islamic Research Institute was established in Karachi to assist 'in the reconstruction of Muslim society on a truly Islamic basis' [Art 207 (2)]. By far the most significant clause affecting future legislation was the provision that the Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology would examine all laws in force immediately 'with a view to bringing them into conformity with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the

Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah' The capital of the Republic is stipulated as being Islamabad, and a large mosque is to occupy the centre of the city. The President must always be a Muslim. Other provisions relate to the elimination of usury (*ribā*), and discouragement of the consumption of alcohol.

The most forthright and enduring achievement of the 'Ayūb-regime is to reform the Muslim family law. The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance promulgated by him on March, 2, 1961 was based upon the report of a 7-member commission created in August 1955 to consider whether the existing laws relating to marriage, divorce, and family maintenance were in keeping with Islamic injunctions concerning the status of women. The commission was composed of six individuals of definitely modernist views, and one religious scholar who published a lengthy dissent. In brief, the commission recommended that polygamy be thoroughly discouraged, that divorce procedures be tightened up and that the wife's right of divorce also be acknowledged, that all marriages and divorces should be registered, that adequate maintenance be assured for all wives, and that the legal age at which girls could be married be raised to sixteen years.

These recommendations were urged, according to the commission's majority, because they were in the true spirit of Islam; most of them were incorporated in the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance. That law has, of course, been attacked by many of the '*ulamā*' as thoroughly un-Islamic. The government prohibited the distribution of a pamphlet containing the '*ulamā*'s views, and slowly began to enforce the law. After martial law was lifted early in 1963, a bill to repeal the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance was introduced in the national assembly—the orthodox elements had chosen this measure as one with which they could fight 'Ayūb Khān. A standing committee of the National Assembly considered the bill to repeal the Family Laws and recommended that it not be passed. President 'Ayūb Khān referred the matter to the Islamic Advisory Council. In the west Pakistan provincial assembly a resolution in favour of the repeal of the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance was easily passed, it was easier to vote for the resolution and please one's rural constituents, than to vote against it and risk one's political position, regardless of personal conviction, especially as it was only a resolution. The repeal bill

came to a vote in the National Assembly on November 26, 1963, and, after twenty hours of debate, was defeated 56-28—an emphatic declaration that whoever was controlling opinion in the legislature, it was not the *'ulamā'*. A month later the Fundamental Rights Bill, the first amendment to the 1962 Constitution, extending somewhat the role of the courts by making all of the Constitution's Principles of Law-making defensible in court, specifically excluded the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance from review—it thus remains the law of the land and cannot be challenged in any court.

The growing strength of political opposition against 'Ayūb's government saw the reassertion of religious forces and slow tactical retreat of modernism in Pakistan. The allied opposition parties joined hands with the orthodox religionists like Mawdudī and his Jamā'at, while 'Ayūb himself accepted the leadership of the Muslim League. The religious pressures within the Muslim League were reflected in the Constitution First Amendment Act (24 December, 1963) that changed the name of the state back to the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan', and also in the declaration that not only all future legislation but also all existing laws should be brought in conformity with the Qur'ān and the *sunna*. The Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology recommended the revision of Anglo-Muhammadan Penal Code that whipping might be added to six types of punishments already prescribed. It also recommended the President to establish a Religious Affairs Authority to organise Islamic institutions, rituals and practices.

All this, however, could not stem the tide of political upsurge against 'Ayūb. The replacement of 'Ayūb by another militarist General Yāhya and the kaleidoscopic developments since then, climaxed by the secession and independence of East Pakistan renamed Bangladesh, served only to keep the fundamental issues involving Islam in the modernisation of Pakistan in a state of suspended animation. For the time being the reality of Bangladesh and its political and economic repercussions on truncated Pakistan loomed large on Pakistan's horizon. In a state of political uncertainty the religious issue was only driven underground. It is just a question of time when Pakistan will again have to face this question with the renewed urgency and application, but surely with greater vision and clarity than so far revealed.

IV

With the creation of Pakistan the Pakistani Muslims could at least look forward to the fruits of their struggle. For the Indian Muslims, i.e. the Muslims of the non-Muslim majority areas in India whose massive adhesion to the Pakistan idea in the election of 1946 helped in no small measure bring Pakistan to existence, the very success of the Pakistan idea constituted a serious crisis of identity, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. This does not of course apply to the nationalist Muslims, who opposed to or held aloof from the Pakistan movement. But even those Muslims, who are broadly covered by the term 'nationalist', do not make a homogenous entity. Leaving aside the secular modernist elements, a significant proportion of them may be called nationalists only by default. The '*ulamā*' of Deoband were opposed not to the idea of an Islamic state in principle, but to the 'westernised' champions of Pakistan of whom they were totally distrustful. Besides, the separated Pakistan was, for them, a disavowal of their Islamic religious mission in India—a negation of their proselytising call.

The crisis in the Indian Muslim's position stems from the basic reality that a large number of them did not really make a political choice between India and Pakistan. Compulsions of geography and socio-economic realities had forced the issue. The Indian Muslim was required to make emotional adjustments at rather sensitive levels. He was to learn to regard as foreigners those with whom he had had deep emotional enmeshment, and live as a fellow-citizen with those for whom he had ever felt a social and emotional distance. It is the idea of Pakistan and the emotional participation of the Indian Muslim in that idea that largely contributed to the potentially disruptive ambivalences of the Muslim position in India.

Pakistani attitudes did everything to stimulate these tendencies. Formally, its official policy was forced by realities to recognize through the Delhi Pact or the Liāqat-Nehru Pact that Pakistan had no extra-territorial claim on the Muslims of India. Emotionally the claim persisted. Central to Pakistani attitudes was non-recognition of the non-communal character of India. Pakistan tended not only to deride secularism²² but also presumed and

22. It is a fairly standard sarcasm to use quotation marks in referring to 'secular' India. (Cantwell Smith, *op cit.*, pp. 270-71).

encouraged disloyalty in Indian Muslims. They derived occasionally a morbid psychological advantage from imagined repression of Muslims or other adverse news about them in India.²³ The cumulative result of the Indian Muslim ambivalence and the Pakistani presumption and encouragement was a persistent efflux of Indian Muslim leaders actual or potential to Pakistan. Numerous young Muslims graduating from the Indian universities continued to seek jobs in Pakistan rather than in India. Several prominent Muslim political leaders, in many cases even after having taken their oath of allegiance to the new country and having accepted positions of trust, later sought and found—or were offered and accepted—opportunities to cross over to Pakistan. Literary and even religious leaders, courted by the government, transferred themselves and their loyalty to Pakistan when more highly-paid prospects were proffered by that State. Perhaps the most damaging incident occurred when a Muslim brigadier general in the Indian army, with access to secret information, in 1955 voluntarily retired and at once settled down in Pakistan, accepting a Pakistan-government post.²⁴ This tendency had not only created a feeling of desertion among the masses of the Indian Muslims, it continued also to falsify the position of those who remained, casting serious doubt on their reliability and loyalty. It undermined eventually the cause of Indian secularism by undoing the works of the Indian secularists, Hindu and Muslim, and strengthening the case of the Hindu communalists. The inability and/or reluctance of the Muslims in India to think of themselves as Indian and not as Pakistani expatriates had created a vicious circle of maladjustment and insecurity for the community, incapacitating them from making a creative response to the dynamics of a nascent secular state.

But the problems for the Indian Muslims of coming to grips with secularism are of a deeper and more complex nature. Between two alternative means of safe-guarding minority interests, namely, protection of individual rights on the basis of common-citizenship, or insulation of the whole group against all other,

23. 'In addition to genuine sympathy, there is a strand in Pakistan psychology not very far below the surface that does not want to hear well of Indo-Muslims.' (*ibid*, p. 273).

24 *ibid*, p. 276

India adopted the individual approach by the rejection of the principle of communal representation in the legislatures in the form both of separate electorates and of reserved seats. Central to Islam, as noted in the beginning of this paper, is the conviction that its purpose includes the structuring of a social community, the organisation of the Muslim group into a closed body based on Islamic Law (*shariat*). It is this central conception of Islam that is being finally challenged by Indian secularism. The Muslim mind in history operated only within the traditional categories of ruling or being ruled: in post-1947 India they confronted a radically new situation of living as equals with others in a country where the majority community also had much to learn about tolerance and equality. It raised the deepest issues of the significance of revelation, truth and interaction with the faith of other peoples which the Indian Muslims needed to reach out to need religious interpretations.

In the face of the demands of the situation confronting them, the Indian Muslim response shows two contrasting uneven trends: the one orthodox, revivalist and even obscurantist and the other secular modernist. The former was more persistent, popular and articulate than the latter. The orthodox approach in Islam in the Indian setting was mainly shaped by the '*ulama*' belonging to various schools—the Indian branch of Mawdudī's Jamā'at, Nadwāt of Lucknow, Deoband, Jam'iyat al-'ulamā, Hind and many other minor ones, such as Tabligh Jamā'at, and Tamīr-i Millat.

The problem of secularism occupies considerable space in the publications of these schools and associations. There is an early attempt to misrepresent secularism through mistranslation of the word to *ghayr mazhabī* or *lā dīnī*, the first meaning anything contrary to religious commandments, the second irreligion or atheism. Secularism as such, as a western concept and also in its Indian context, came under fire. Javid Hasan²⁵ argues that the concept of separation of the state and religion is 'foreign to Islamic ideology', while V. S. Ahmad Basha²⁶ considers that it undermines values which are considered basic elements in the social personality of a Muslim. According to S. Abdul

25. *Radiance*, Delhi, December 5, 1965.

26. *ibid*, January 31, 1965.

Ghaffar,²⁷ it is 'an irony of fate' that 'the country which believes in spiritual values of life and the maintenance of her spiritual and cultural heritage should have chosen to call herself secular.'

Nationalism also was subjected to scathing criticism. S. M. Yusuf²⁸ maintains that 'never in the past was the ideal of Islamic Unity confronted with such a formidable ouster as nationalism.' *Radiance*²⁹ urges Muslims not to consider themselves a minority but an 'International Party charged with the responsibility of reforming mankind.' In its anxiety to drive home the point, *Radiance* misquotes Dr. Johnson, 'Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel'. 'The dream of national integration could never be achieved in India,' writes *Margdeep*,³⁰ 'unless the whole country accepted the Islamic way of life. . . '

The reform of Muslim Family Laws proved to be the most explosive and intricate issue involving Islam and modernity in India as in Pakistan. The traditional Muslim Law highly discriminates against the Muslim woman in favour of the male in the matter of marriage and divorce. Art. 44 of the Indian Constitution vests the Indian Parliament with the responsibility of legislating a uniform civil code. In 1948 the Constituent Assembly rejected amendments proposed by Muslim members to exempt Muslim Personal Law from the operation of Article 44. The task of codifying Hindu Personal Law was already achieved, but the Indian Government remained very cautious in approaching the question of Muslim Personal Law. In 1963 the matter was discussed in the Parliament, when the Muslim representatives raised a storm of protests. They answered that the Muslim religious spokesmen would themselves take initiative in this matter. The then Law Minister, Mr. A. K. Sen, agreed not to take any government initiative and welcomed that from the '*ulama*'. A meeting of the Nadwat-ul-'ulamā' was called at Lucknow, and a general body was formed along with a sub-committee to submit recommendations to the general body. The sub-committee never did meet and the matter lay in cold storage. The Muslim reformist M. C. Chagla pointed out that the delay amounts to the with-

27. *ibid*, December 28, 1965

28. *ibid*, December 13, 1964.

29. *ibid*, July, 1964

30. *ibid.*, October, 1962.

holding of part of Article 15 which seeks to abolish, amongst many other grounds, sex discrimination. The Parliament is also empowered to intervene and amend the law by virtue of Article 25. The government of India cannot force this reform down unwilling throats. The initiative must come from within the community itself. Until such time the Personal Law of the Indian Muslims will lag far behind their co-religionists elsewhere, not only in Turkey and Egypt, but in Pakistan as well.³¹

Sections of the Indian Muslim intelligentsia have been trying to weaken the stranglehold of the 'ulama' and the obscurantists in the society by focussing on the liberal and secular tendencies in Islamic developments. Professor Habib, Prof. Mujeeb, Dr. Fyzee and S. Abid Husam are a few noted among them. In the seminar on secularism held at the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, and those on Islamic Tradition and Modernity at Hyderabad and Bombay organized by the Indian committee for Cultural Freedom in 1966 and 1967, wide range of modernist views concerning Indian Islam were propounded by Justice Beg, Dr. Jeb Rahman, Laeeq Futehally, Moin Shakir, S. E. Hassnain, Anwar Mowazzam, Alam Khundmiri, and Rashiduddin Khan.

At the operative level Mr. M. C. Chagla, Dr. S. Jeelani and Hamid Dalwai rendered distinguished service. Dalwai spearheaded a campaign to raise the Muslim women to their constitutional position as equal citizens in the teeth of orthodox persecution and harassment. In 1964 he started with a tiny delegation of seven women. In 1966 the number reached 30. The movement then gathered momentum. In April 1968 there were 300 women in Poona itself taking active part. In June 1967, 600 Muslim women of Ahmedabad held a meeting. 'It is an unfortunate irony of fate,' says Karandikar, 'that in secular India headed by a lady Prime Minister, the Muslim women have to launch an agitation for securing the right of equality and protection against discrimination and oppression.'³²

V

Islam has, therefore, remained a seminal factor in the process of both Pakistan and India's coming to grips with modernity.

31. Smith, D. E. *India as a Secular State*, Princeton, 1963, pp. 422-3.

32. Karandikar, M. A. *Islam in India's Transition to Modernity*, Connecticut, 1969, pp. 381-2.

In distinguishing between the pre-independence/partition phase of the Islamic encounter with modernity and its subsequent independent Pakistani phase and the Indian one is able to perceive not only the contrasting calls of Islam but their uneven achievements as well.

In relative terms Islam in the earlier phase appeared more effective and dynamic in terms of realising the avowed objectives of the community vis-à-vis the problems of the time. In the face of external threats - actual, potential and fictional - Islam was able to provide a focus and almost a consensus, however undefined or ill-defined, for the aroused community. The historical present seen as adverse and hostile to the realisation of communal ideals, was made to change and conform to the needs of the ideal. Having re-cast history, and secured themselves against external threats, the Muslims came to discover a total lack of a collective self-image. If history was viewed earlier as inimical to the ideal, now the ideal itself was found, in the experiences of Muslim modernisers, wanting. The orthodox and fundamentalist leaders had already had a new version of 'inimical history' dominated by the secular ("irreligious"?) and westernised modernists. History has almost come to a full cycle since the first contact of the subcontinental Muslims with modernity.

SOME NOTES ON THE KSATRIYA MOVEMENT IN NORTH BENGAL.

A. K. ROY.

Rājbamśī Ksatriyas¹ of north Bengal, according to the census of 1931, form the third largest caste of the Hindu society in Bengal. This community spreads over the districts of Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Maldaha, Rangpur, and Bagura in undivided Bengal and the areas of Bihar and Assam adjacent to North Bengal. Their number according to census of 1931 was 18,06,390. The origin of this caste is still shrouded in mystery and confusion. This is more or less true of every caste living in the subcontinent. Scholars are not unanimous about the origin of this caste and its racial identification. They not only differ but often make contradictory remarks about these people who once dominated the northern region of Bengal.

Although members of this community have been accepted as Ksatriyas by the Hindu society in recent times, the picture was quite different even at the turn of the present century. Upper castes of the Hindu society particularly the immigrants from lower Bengal used to despise them as lowborn and they were granted a very low status in the caste strata of the Hindu society. They did not represent a similar picture in Assam and Kāmrupa. They were included there among the caste Hindus and in Bihar the advanced class of this people, particularly the Zemindars, enjoyed the Ksatriya status.

Rājbamśī Ksatriyas have been claiming from generation to generation Ksatriya descent and Aryan origin. Being numerically

1. Rājbamśīs of north Bengal are variously known as Paundra Ksatriyas, Vrātya-Ksatriyas or Bhanga Ksatriyas. They claim Ksatriya descent which had been long ago recognised by the pandit samaja of various schools of the Hindu society including that of Benaras. In order to respect their sentiment and considering their forceful arguments behind the claim, at the same time to distinguish the community from other Ksatriya castes of India, I have preferred here to call them Rājbamśī Ksatriyas, instead of, simply Ksatriyas.

superior and by virtue of the fact that once they ruled this area, this community used to exert considerable influence in the past over other castes in the locality. Their claim to Ksatriya status and belonging to the royal race was never seriously challenged by local Hindu castes including local Brahmins, and Maithili and Kāmrupī Brāhmins who had settled in this area long ago. In fact, the Maithili and Kāmrupī Brāhmins used to serve as their priests and *Kulāgurus*. But with the influx of a large number of caste-Hindu immigrants, which started during the Muslim rule of Bengal and reached the peak during the British advent, and with modern education, Zemindary and a new economic system introduced by the British after their conquest, the pattern of the Hindu society in north Bengal completely changed. These immigrants, who in course of time, took over the control of economy and other social forces, became the social leaders and guardians of the Hindu society. They began to look down upon the local people particularly Rājbamśī Ksatriyas as backward, uncultured and even *antaja*. The immigrants had little contact with this local people and scanty knowledge about their social structure and custom, culture, history and traditions. These caste Hindus seriously challenged the claim of Rājbamśī Ksatriyas to a Ksatriya origin. They even despised the Maithili, Kāmrupī and local Brāhmins who did not belong to the Hindu orthodoxy introduced by the Senas in Bengal. The local Ksatriyas, particularly Zemindars and Jotdars found themselves in a peculiar situation, although they once commanded respects and honour in the locality. As they were educationally backward, economically poor and socially degraded they had to bear and absorb ill-treatments, insulting remarks and hatred from the caste-Hindus. Being a once powerful and dominant race of this region and conscious of their tradition, history and culture their proud sentiments were grievously hurt. This created great resentment and despair among the people. The situation became so intolerable that many Rājbamśī Ksatriyas began to leave Hinduism embracing other faiths. Others, however, were determined to fight back the attitude of the caste-Hindus which resulted in an inevitable clash with the caste-Hindus culminating in a wide-spread Ksatriya movement throughout north Bengal and adjacent areas of Bihar and Assam. In the present note we propose to give a brief account of this movement and its impact on Rājbamśī Ksatriyas and the Hindu society as a whole.

I

As already indicated, the origin of Ksatriya movement could be located in the hatred and ill-treatment received by the community at the hands of the upper castes of the Hindu society ; but the immediate cause of this movement was census of India, 1891 Census authority in 1891 gave instructions to the effect that, 'Rāj̄bansī is the same as Koch' (*sic*) and as such Rāj̄bansī Ksatriyas he returned with the Koch community as had been done in the previous census of 1872². Obviously, the census authority issued such orders on the basis of reports gathered by Hamilton³, Hodgson⁴, Hunter⁵, Dalton⁶, Rowny⁷, and Risley⁸ about Rāj̄bansī Ksatriyas whom they considered to be, more or less, identical with Kochas although there might be some variance here and there. The census authority's circular barred the people of the community to register their caste as Ksatriya. This created resentment among this people and in many places of Rangpur, Dinajpur and other parts of north Bengal they refused to disclose their names to the census officials and field workers. Many untoward incidents also took place. Rangpur became the centre of Ksatriya movement.

On February 6, 1891 Rāj̄bansī Ksatriyas of Rangpur openly demonstrated against the order of F. A. Skyne, then District Magistrate of Rangpur who had asked the local superintendents to enrol Rāj̄bansī Ksatriyas under the head of Koch. One Srī Haramohan Kājan̄chī, a local Zemindar and Rāj̄bansī Ksatriya by caste, led the movement. Some time back he formed a samity

- 2 Beverly, H, *Census Report of Bengal*, 1872, Vol I, p 130.
3. Buchanan Hamilton, who surveyed Eastern India between 1807-14 and whose records were later published by M Martin under the title '*Eastern India*' in 1838, writing about Kochas and Rāj̄bansīs reports, "I have no doubt however that all Koch are sprung from the same stock and that most of the Rajbansis are Koch "
- 4 Hodgson, B H, *J Asiatic Soc Bengal*, Vol xviii, pt II, 1849, p 704-706.
- 5 Hunter, W W., *Statistical account of Bengal*, Vol X, 1876, p 344
6. Dalton, Col, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, 1872, p 89-92.
- 7 Rowny, H. B., *Wild tribes of India*, 1882, p 146.
8. Risley, H. H., *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, 1891, Vol. I, p 491.

called '*Rangpur Vrātya Ksatriya Jātir Unnati Bidhāyanī Sabhā* for Rājbamśī Ksatriyas of Rangpur with a view to improve the conditions of his community'⁹ Since then he had been working to awaken Rājbamśī Ksatriyas urging them to give up their inertia and exert their right and influence as they used to do in the past. He held meetings in different localities and began collecting history, cultural heritage, traditions, proverbs and sayings of Rājbamśī Ksatriyas. He also met many Brāhmin pandits, *Naiyayiks*, *Śāstrakāras* of Rangpur and Kāmrupa, and other elite sections of Hindu society in Rangpur. To his credit, he was successful in getting recognition of his caste from the 'Pandit samaj' of Rangpur and Kāmrupa and a section of the elite group in Rangpur.¹⁰

In a meeting of the *Rangpur Vrātya Ksatriya Jātir Unnati Bidhāyanī Sabhā* on February 6, 1891, it was decided that a formal protest would be lodged with the District magistrate urging him to recognise Rājbamśī Ksatriyas as a separate caste from Koch and to allow them to be enroled as Ksatriyas in the census. The District Magistrate sought the opinion of Rangpur *Dharma Sabhā*, an association of Brāhmin Pandits and mouthpiece of the Hindu society in social and religious matters. Mahāmahopādhyāy Pandit Yadaveśwar Tarkaratna was authorised to give opinion on behalf of the *Sabhā*, who wrote back to the District Magistrate clearly stating that Rājbamśīs and Kochas were entirely two different castes; social, religious, marriage customs and food habits of Rājbamśīs were as good as of upper caste-Hindus. On the other hand, according to him, Kochas were degraded and untouchables and their customs, habits and religious practices were quite different from normal Hindus. After quoting from many Śāstras, he finally concluded that Rājbamśīs of north Bengal

9. Barman, U N., *Rājbamśī Ksatriya Jātir Itihās*, Jalpaiguri, 1370 BS, p 8.

10 *Papers of Ksatriya Samity, Rangpur*. About ten years back when I visited Rangpur, I had the opportunity to examine some papers on Ksatriya movement in the Samity's office. The present note is mainly based on those papers and I am very much thankful to the then office secretary of the Samity for kindly allowing me to see these papers. During our liberation struggle as I was informed later, office of the Samity was ransacked and almost all papers of the of the Samity were destroyed.

were of Ksatriya origin and as such they might be recognised as *Vrātya Ksatriya*.¹¹

The District Magistrate accepted the opinion of Pandit Yādaveswar Tarkaratna on behalf of the *Dharma Sabhā*, and issued a fresh order dated February, 17, 1891 to the effect that as there was no time to change the schedule the members of this community however should be returned as *Vrātya-Ksatriyas*. But some Zemindars and a section of elite of Rangpur town lodged a protest to the magistrate against the decision. The District magistrate referred the matter back to the *Dharma Sabhā* for a solution.¹² The *Dharma Sabhā* in its turn called a convention of Brāhman pandits, *Śāstrakāras*, *Naiyayiks*, and influential members of the Hindu society on March 15, 1891 to settle the dispute. The Navadvīp school of Hindu orthodoxy was also invited to participate in the deliberation. The *Sabhā* in the meanwhile, interviewed a large number of Rājbamśī Ksatriyas, important personalities of Hindu society, and many Brāhmin pandits of different localities to know the social customs, religious practices and general habits of Rājbamśī Ksatriyas. On March 15, a convention was held in Rangpur town with Prasanna Nath Choudhury, President of *Dharma Sabhā* in the Chair. About four hundred representatives of different Hindu schools of '*Pandit Samāj*' and influential members of the Hindu society attended the convention. Navadvīp school was represented by a strong team of five learned pandits headed by Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhubaneśwar Vidyāratna, the greatest *Naiyayik* of his time. After long deliberations which lasted for a few hours, the convention was convinced that Rājbamśīs living in north Bengal and adjacent areas were of Ksatriya descent and unanimously agreed to accord Ksatriya status to them. It recommended that since in modern times, Rājbamśī Ksatriyas had been degraded to a *Vrātya* state due to non-observance of Vedic practices they should be acknowledged as *Vrātya-Ksatriyas*.¹³

11. Barman, U. N., *op. cit.*, p. 8. The full text of the letter was reproduced in this book.

12. A letter from Mr. Skyne, then District magistrate of Rangpur, to Rangpur *Dharma Sabhā*, memo No. 579 dated February 28, 1891.

13. Barman, U. N., *op. cit.*, p. 11.

Accepting the opinion of the convention Skyne made a strong recommendation on April 3, to the Superintendent of Census to permit Rājbamśī Ksatriyas to be enroled as Vrātya-Ksatriya against their caste status. He also issued a general circular for all concerned to the effect that from Jaistha 1, 1298 BS Rājbamśī Ksatriyas might write their caste as Vrātya-Ksatriya in all official matters and papers. This pacified the Ksatriyas, and for the time being the movement subsided, as the leaders directed their activities to social upliftment of the community.

The movement however created a great enthusiasm among the people who began to shake off their inferiority complex, declare themselves openly as Ksatriyas and adopt Ksatriya customs and titles. But although it was getting popular and social awakening was visible, its nature was still sporadic and localized. By this time Harmohan Khājānchi, pioneer of the Ksatriya movement had died. At that time, the leadership was taken over by a more competent, dynamic and forceful person named Rai Saheb Panchanan Sarkar (better known as Barman as he adopted Barman, a Ksatriya-like title), an advocate of Rangpur, originally an inhabitant of Cooch Bihar state where he could not find a job although he was the first M.A. of the native state. This created frustration and disappointment in the young mind of Panchanan who then after passing the Law Examination from Calcutta University left his native state and joined Rangpur Bar in 1901. Panchanan Barman was a remarkably capable and gifted man possessing enormous zeal and organizing capability under whose leadership the Ksatriya movement took a new turn.

II

Ksatriya movement gathered momentum again during the census of 1901. The Ksatriyas after their movement in 1891 had expected that Government would accede to their demand, that their Ksatriya origin would be acknowledged in the census report and that they would be returned as a separate caste. Contrary to their expectation, Rājbamśī Ksatriyas were returned under the general head, Koch, a term very much despised by the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas, signifying that Rājbamśī Ksatriya is same as Koch. It was also revealed to them that in the current census also, orders had been issued to field workers to enrol

Rājbaṁśī Ksatriyas as mere 'Rājbaṁśī', but not as Ksatriya. This enraged the community and caused disappointment. The Rājbaṁśī Ksatriya leaders met in Rangpur and sent on February 1, 1901 a protest note to P.C. Mitra, then District Magistrate of Rangpur, urging him to accept the status of their caste as Ksatriya. The District Magistrate rejected the protest note with the remarks, 'on a recent reference to the Superintendent of the census operation, he has ordered that the men are to be classed Rājbaṁśī and not Vratya-Khatriyas. I therefore decline to reopen the matter.' It was apparent that the census authority had not accepted the recommendations of Skyne in 1891. Rājbaṁśī Ksatriyas then appealed to the census Superintendent who also turned down their prayer saying 'It is now too late to issue any order on the point' On April 19, 1901 a memorandum was submitted to Sir John Woodburn, then Governor of Bengal with no result. As usual Rājbaṁśī Ksatriyas were again bracketed with the Koch community in the census of 1901.

Though disappointed, Ksatriyas launched a vigorous movement with renewed zeal. This time they concentrated mainly on the social front. The movement spread throughout north Bengal and came down to village level. A great upsurge was clearly visible in the society. Social reforms were vigorously carried on. As a sign of twice born (*dwija*), Rājbaṁśī Ksatriyas began wearing sacred thread (*upavita*) thus imposing their higher status in the caste-oriented Hindu society. They continued and insisted on treating their caste as Ksatriya in all official matters. Their leaders urged them to take education seriously and send their children to educational institutions. Panchanan Barman, their leader declared that unless the 'Ksatriya samāj' could stand on its own feet, nobody would accord them Ksatriya status and that they must achieve it by their right and merit. He also reminded them of their historical past and traditions and asked them to shake off inferiority complex. The movement inevitably brought about face to face confrontation with other castes particularly the so-called upper castes of Hindus who were not prepared to accept these men as Ksatriyas. Many Brāhmins began to refuse to serve these people as their priests in religious and social ceremonies and some officials refused to record the caste of these people as Ksatriya. But fortunately, Maithilī, Kāmrupī

and local Brāhmins continued to support their cause and even participated in the movement.

In the meanwhile, zealous attempts were being made to collect materials of history, traditions, proverbs, sayings and popular folk-tale and songs to establish their claim on a sholastic footing. One Rājbamśī Ksatriya scholar, Pandit Hari Kīshor Adhikari, well versed in Sanskrit and Hindu scripture published a booklet '*Rājbamśī Kula-Pradīpa*' in which he tried to establish from Hindu scripture and *Purānas* that Rājbamśī Ksatriyas were really *Paundra Ksatriyas*. Other worth-mentioning works of Rājbamśī Ksatriya scholars of that period are '*Rājbamśī Kula-Kaumdi*' by Pandit Jagamohan Sinha, and '*Rājbamśī Kula-Dīpakā*' by Maniram Kabyabhusana. Panchanan Barman himself collected a large number of traditional sayings, myths, folksongs and tales, and proverbs prevalent in the community. Some of his collections were published in *Rangpur Sāhitya Parisat Patrikā*.¹⁴ Meanwhile opinions from different pandit-samajās of various parts of India were being sought in respect of the claim of the community to Ksatriya origin.

Panchanan Barman and his colleagues however felt that in order to make an impact of their movement on the Rājbamśī community and the Hindu society as a whole, the Ksatriyas must be brought under an organization. With this view in mind a conference of the Ksatriyas of north Bengal was convened on May 1, 1910 (18th Baisakh, 1317 BS) in Rangpur town.¹⁵ In presence of several hundred representatives from various parts of north Bengal, Bihar and Assam, the *Ksatriya Samity*, an organisation of Ksatriyas was formed and its aims and objectives were also formulated. An ad hoc committee with Sri Madhusudan Roy, a pleader of Jalpaiguri Bar, as President and Panchanan Barman as Secretary of the Samity, was constituted. The conference expressed the view that Rājbamśī Ksatriyas for generations had

14. See for example, *Rangpur Sāhitya Parisat Patrikā*, Bhāga 2 (1), 2 (2), 4 (1), 6 (2), 7 (1). It may be mentioned here that he was one of the co-founders of the Rangpur Sāhitya Parisat in 1312 BS and was elected editor of the patrikā.

15. Sinha, K. M., *Rai Sāheb Panchanan Barmār Jibanī*, 1939, p 11-15.

been known as *Bhanga* or *Vrātya-Ksatriya*, formed distinctly a separate Hindu caste who had no social intercourse with Kochas or any other castes. It urged the Government to recognise these facts and accord Ksatriya status to these people. In the next year Samity's constitution was approved and formally registered with its head office at Rangpur. The organisational structure of the samity was as follows : i) an Executive Committee to formulate and implement Samity's policies, ii) a Finance Committee to look after the financial matters, and iii) a Publication and Publicity Committee. The samity had members of three categories : i) *Sādhāran* or ordinary members, (any member of the community is eligible for its membership on payment of nominal annual subscription), ii) *Prachāraka* or *Ganya* (distinguished) member, (the members who would devote whole time for the work of the samity were eligible for this), and iii) *Mānya* or respectable members.

The decision of the conference was communicated to the provincial Governments of Bengal, Bihar and Assam and district authorities. The movement took a new shape and dimension. C. Tindal, then District magistrate of Rangpur very strongly recommended to the Census Superintendent of Assam and East Bengal that *Rājbamśī* Ksatriyas should be recognised as Ksatriyas in the census of 1911, and that the word '*Rājbamśī*' should also be put within a bracket in order to distinguish the community from other Ksatriya castes of India.¹⁶ The deputy commissioner of Goalpara district in Assam ordered the field superintendents to enrol them as Ksatriyas. Similar instructions were issued in other districts including Purnea in Bihar. In Cooch Bihar state, however, the state authority was reluctant to grant the Ksatriya status to these men. Local *Rājbamśī* Ksatriyas there appealed to the state superintendent who however granted their prayer. In spite of these general orders issued by the district authorities, the field workers who were reluctant to obey the order, were creating troubles for the *Rājbamśīs*. Even in the district of Rangpur, the centre of the movement, *Rājbamśī* Ksatriyas were returned as mere '*Rājbamśī*' and not Ksatriyas. As the anomaly was pointed out by Panchanan Barman, the superintendent replied

16. A letter from Mr C. Tindal to the Census Superintendent of Assam and East Bengal, memo No. 3738 dated December 16, 1910

that this would be rectified, and although they were returned as Rājbamśis their Ksatriya caste would be recognised in the census report. The Ksatriya samity however continued to exert pressure on the Government. A delegation was sent to wait upon the Governor of the then province of Assam and East Bengal and a memorandum was submitted to the Chief Secretary at Dacca. The delegation also met the Cenus Commissioner, E. H. Ghorie in Calcutta. The movement at last met with success. In the final report of census of 1911 the Ksatriya status of Rājbamśi Ksatriyas was tacitly recognised and they were shown as a separate Hindu caste as 'Rajbansi' putting the word Ksatriya within a bracket.¹⁷

III

Ksatriya movement flowed in two streams. They demanded official sanction and social recognition of Ksatriya status of their caste from the Government and the orthodox Hindu society as well. At the same time, the movement was conducted to awaken the general mass of the community, organise their social structures and reform social customs and religious practices in the light of modern development of the Hindu society. In order to achieve the latter objective the samity appointed many *prachārakas* which included a good number of Maithilī and Kāmrupī Brāhmins who carried the movement down to village level.

Rājbamśi Ksatriyas for generations had been claiming to be Ksatriyā but had fallen degraded (*Vrātya*) because of non-observance of Vedic and orthodox Hindu practices. In *chāturvarna* system of classification Ksatriyas rank next to Brāhmins and are twice born (*dwija*) and must be admitted to *upanayana* within the age of 21 years. Since Rājbamśi Ksatriyas were degraded Ksatriya, they were not entitled to wear sacred thread. According to Hindu *śāstras*, a *dwija* who has not gone through *upanayana sasnskāra* in proper time, or if his forefathers, for consecutively three generations, had not been admitted to *upanayana*, is called *Patita Sābitri* and he will have no right to wear sacred thread and

17. O'Melley, L. S. S., Census Report of India (1911), Vol. V, pt. I

read *Vedas*. He is a *vrātya*.¹⁸ Rājamsī Ksatriyas therefore sought the opinion of *pandit samājas* if they could be readmitted to *upanayana sanskāra* and thereby to full Ksatriya status after performing necessary *prāyaschitya anusthāna*. The famous and learned Hindu pandits and *naiyāyiks* of various parts of India including Benaras, Navadwip, Calcutta, Mithila and Kāmrupa recognised them as Ksatriya and suggested that they were entitled to be admitted to *upanayana sanskāra* and full Ksatriya status after performing *prāyaschityas* as prescribed by them.¹⁹

At the suggestion of *pandit samaj* of Mithila the day of Māgha 27, 1319 BS was selected for performance of *prāyaschitya anusthāna* and wearing of *Jagna-upavita* at Debiganj near Jalpaiguri on the bank of river Karatoyā, a holy river of Rājamsī Ksatriyas. Vedic Brāhmins from Mithilā, Kāmrupa, Benaras and Calcutta conducted the *homa* and other rituals connected with the *prāyaschitya anusthāna*. Thousands of Rājamsī Ksatriyas took sacred thread and were formally admitted to the twice born caste. Then within two years 1,82,154 Rājamsī Ksatriyas took *upavita* at different places.²⁰

Leaders of the movement also worked for spread of modern education among their men. Many primary schools were established in villages. Hostels meant for students belonging to this community were also established at different places.

For the benefit of poor cultivators of the community a 'Ksatriya Bank' was established in 1327 BS at Rangpur which flourished within a very short time, and one or two branches were opened in different locality of the district.

18 *Manu-Samhitā*, Ch 2, sloka 39-40 Manu says

অত উর্দ্ধং ব্রহ্মোহপ্যেতে যথাকালম্ সংস্কৃতঃ ।

সাবিত্রীপতিতা ব্রাত্যা ভবন্ত্যর্থাবিগহিতা : ॥ ৩৯

নৈতৈবপুতৈবিবধিবদাপদ্যপি হি কহিচিৎ ।

ব্রাহ্মান্ যৌনাংশ্চ সম্বন্ধান্নাচবেদব্রাহ্মনঃ সহ ॥ ৪০

19 *Ksatriya Upanayana Vyabasthā*, Ksatriya Samity, Rangpur, 1319 BS, *Vrātya Mochana Paddhati*, Ksatriya Samity, Rangpur, 1318 BS.

20. *Proceedings of the 4th Annual conference of the Ksatriya Samity* (1320 BS), Ksatriya Samity, Rangpur.

The samity also published a monthly journal, 'Ksatriya Patrikā' which continued for several years. It published a large number of booklets on Hindu śāstras in intelligible language for the common folk.

Many physical training centres were opened at different places of north Bengal. From time to time teams of trained teachers were sent from the central office to these centres for inspection and also to open new centres. These sorts of activities created a great enthusiasm among the youths.

After putting the Ksatriya samity on a firm footing Panchanan Barman began to look out for making contact with Rajputs and other Ksatriyas of north and western India. In 1326 BS he was successful in establishing contact with them through one Kṛṣṇa Mohan Sinha, a Rajput Ksatriya descent whose family had been residing in Cooch Bihar for a few generations. In the mean while, under the leadership of Rajputs the 'All India Ksatriya Mahāsabha' was formed on all-India basis for the purpose of uniting the Ksatriyas scattered throughout India and to improve their conditions. An eastern branch of the Mahāsabha was also constituted. Mahāsabha leaders, through its eastern branch, got in touch with Panchanan Barman and invited him to join all India Ksatriya movement and bring the eastern Ksatriyas, namely Rājbamśī Ksatriyas within the fold of the Mahāsabha. At the invitation of Mansinha Barman and Janakipal Sinha, two secretaries of eastern branch of the Mahāsabha, he visited Aloar during a Ksatriya gathering in 1327 BS and exchanged ideas with other Ksatriya leaders of north and western India. His visit proved very successful. Ksatriya leaders were impressed by his leadership and other qualities. Rājbamśī Ksatriyas were acclaimed as Ksatriyas and Ksatriya Samity was incorporated in the Mahāsabha as sub-branch of Eastern branch. In an article entitled '*Prāchya Ksatriyako Pattā*' published in the 'Rajput' the official journal of the Mahāsabha, Rājbamśī Ksatriyas were acclaimed as their fellow brethren and urged to join the movement of the Ksatriyas under the banner of Ksatriya Mahāsabha.²¹

21 Sinha, K. M., *op cit.*, p 33

Next year Panchanan Barman was elected Vice President of the Eastern branch of Ksatriya Mahāsabhā and he continued to hold this office for several years. On being invited by the Mahāsabhā and Mahārājā of Aloar in Rajputana he represented Ksatriyas of Bengal at the All-India Ksatriya Conference held in Aloar in the year 1331 BS. Again in the year 1334 he visited Indore at the invitation of Mahārājā of Holkar and led a delegation of Ksatriyas of Bengal at the annual conference of the Mahāsabhā. On his way back he visited Ujjayinī, Dwārakā, Chitor and Ajmir and had talks with many Ksatriya leaders.²² In order to reciprocate his visits, the Mahāsabhā sent a strong delegation consisting of some top leaders including Dalabant Sinha, Janakīpal Sinha, Mahendrapratap Sinha and Suryabamsa Sinha at the annual conference of the Ksatriya Samity held in 1335 BS at Rangpur. In brief it may be stated that the Ksatriya Samity played a significant role in all India Ksatriya movement. This is no less an achievement on the part of the samity.

At the time of first World War when British Government declared war against Germany, India being a colonial country also got involved in the war India Government began recruiting soldiers from Bengal also. The Ksatriya movement had created so much enthusiasm among the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas that they saw in it a golden opportunity to show their Ksatriya spirit by joining the war. At the call of the Samity hundreds of Ksatriyas joined the British Army. From a single district of Goalpara in Assam, four hundred and fifty men from this community were recruited. These Ksatriya soldiers in the British Army fought in Belgium, France and Egypt. Panchanan Barman appealed to the Government to form two battalions of soldiers exclusively of Rājbamśī Ksatriyas Indian Government assured him that his prayer was under consideration and would be given due weightage. However the end of war shattered the possibility of formation of a Ksatriya battalion That Rājbamśī Ksatriyas proved to be gallant soldiers, was communicated by the head of Karachi garrison to Panchanan Barman with the remarks, 'The men of this (Ksatriya) community

22 *Proceedings of the 18th annual conference of the Ksatriya Samity (1334),*
Rangpur

make better soldiers than most of others' It may be mentioned here that out of the total recruits from Bengal more than fifty percent were recruited from among the Ksatriya community. British Government also praised the bravery and courage shown by these soldiers and in recognition of the service Panchanan Barman rendered in the war effort, he was conferred M B. E.

The samity expanded its activity in the political arena also. When the election was held under 1935 Act, the Samity put up many candidates in the constituencies where Rājbamśī Ksatriyas formed numerical majority. The basic character of the samity, primarily a social organization, however, was non-political. As a result people of various political opinions and shades found place within its fold. Decision of the samity to enter into the field of political activities created some difficulties. Moreover, complexion of political scene in India had changed dramatically from 20s to 30s. Congress had become a popular mass organization and its call for total independence had reached the people. Many leaders of the samity had been associated with the Congress and this did not come into conflict with the samity's activities so long as it was a social organisation. Educated youths of this community joined the non-co-operation movement and many had suffered imprisonment. Thus decision of the samity to expand its activity in political field created differences in the leadership and rank and file. Meanwhile the Communist party of India gained popular ground among the masses of the Ksatriya community. Popular slogans of the communists to establish *Krisak-Sramik* Raj and a class-less society in which all castes, followers of different religions would be treated as equals easily brought socially conscious Rājbamśī Ksatriyas in its fold. It is no wonder that '*Tebhāgā*' movement in north Bengal became so popular among Rājbamśī Ksatriyas and this movement produced many dedicated communist workers from the community. Notable among them were Rupnarayan and Shaheed Kamparam Sinha²³. All these diversions and,

23 Both Rupnarayan and Kamparam Sinha gave their lives for the country. Kamparam met his death in Khapra ward in Rajshahi central jail when police opened fire upon the prisoners in 1948. Rupnarayan, a veteran krisak leader, was assassinated after liberation.

above all, demand made by all progressive political parties to abolish the caste system which as a social institution had already lost its original significance in the modern Hindu society, had serious effect on the Ksatriya movement which almost came to halt after the death of Panchanan Barman in 1935. However the samity continued to exist till late 40s, but surely it had lost its influence and control over the community. And with the partition of India in 1947, the movement came to an end.

IV

Now we may take into account the main arguments on which Rājbamśī Ksatriyas base their claim of Ksatriya origin. The caste of a Hindu social group is determined by its own name or the appellation applied to it by other groups and also by its traditions, social and religious customs and practices together with the degree of influence it exerts on other social groups socially, politically and above all, economically.

From time immemorial Rājbamśī Ksatriyas through generations had been claiming Ksatriya origin and they used to call themselves Paundra Ksatriya, Vratya-Ksatriya, or Bhanga-Ksatriya. They very much resent on being called by any other name. On the other hand there was no uniformity of name, given by the outsiders to this social group. Other castes particularly the immigrants from lower Bengal used to call them by various names depending on the locality. In Dinajpur all local people were termed Rājbamśī, Bāhe or Paliya, terms very much despised and resented by Rājbamśī Ksatriyas. In Rangpur they used to be known as Bāhe, Rājbamśī and Koch which were but synonymous terms. Some even used to call them *antaja*, meaning low-born, aboriginal, uncultured and uncivilised. No doubt, all these terms have their origin in ignorance and hatred towards the local people. It must however be admitted that Rājbamśī Ksatriyas had never been treated as untouchables. Even *Kulin Brāhmans* used to take water and *Kāchā Āhār* from their hands.

Traditions prevalent in a Hindu social group are important factors in identifying its caste. That Rājbamśī Ksatriyas traditionally used to call themselves Ksatriyas found expression in *Jāga-sangīts*, a kind of *Pālā gān*, composed and popularised by Ratiram during the time of Warren Hastings (1777—1785). Ratiram, a

famous person of his time, in collaboration with Sibachandra Roy, a Zemindar of Itakumari of Rangpur district, led an armed peasant rebellion with their Rājbamśī Ksatriya followers against the tyrannical *Izradar* Devī Sinha, appointed by the East India Company. Ratiram mentions his caste as Bhanga-Ksatriya in his *Pālā-gāns*²⁴. Even Buchanan Hamilton who equated Rājbamśī Ksatriyas with Koch tribes from ethnical considerations, recorded in his survey the tradition of the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas claiming Ksatriya origin. While discussing the genealogy of Kāmrupa and Kāmata Rājās, whom Rājbamśī Ksatriyas consider as their kings belonging to their own caste, the same writer recorded, "It is indeed contended by the Rajbansis that Nildwaj was of their caste"²⁵. About the family of one Mahiram Choudhury, a Rājbamśī Ksatriya Zemindar of Assam, Buchanan's report says, "But he himself as usual pretends to be descended from the Khatriyas"²⁶. Risley also mentions this tradition when he says that the people "describe themselves as Rajbansis or Bhanga Kshatriyas—a designation which enables them to represent themselves as an outlying branch of the Kshatriyas of Hindu tradition who fled to north eastern Bengal in order to escape from the wrath of Parasu-Rama. They claim descent from Raja Dasaratha, the father of Rama, they keep Brahmans, imitate the orthodox ritual in their marriage ceremonies"²⁷. According to Vas²⁸, the tradition of their Ksatriya origin runs like this, "Two thirds of the Hindu population are known as Rajbansis, and they claim to be descendents of Bhanga-Kshatriyas from Arya-Varta. In the time of Sagar Raja of the Ramayana a number of outcast Kshatriyas settled in the banks of the old Karatoya river. At

24. Tarkaratna, Yādaveswar, *Rangpur Sāhitya Pārisat Patrikā*, Bhag 3 (4), 1315 BS, p 169-193. Ratiram says,

হাযবে বাজাব বংশে লভিয়া জনম

পবন্তবামেব ভম এ বড সবম।

বণে ভল দিয়া মোবা এদেশে আইসাহি

ভলক্ষত্রি বাজবংশী এই নামে আছি।

25. Martin, M., *Eastern India*, Vol III, 1838, p 406.

26. *ibid*, p 538

27. Risley, H H, *The People of India*, 2nd Ed., Delhi, 1969, p 74; also see *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Vol, I, 1891, p XVII

28. Vas, J A, *Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers*, Rangpur, Allahabad, 1911, p 38.

a later date when many Kshatriyas fled from the destroying axe of the Brahman warrior Parasuram, who had vowed their extermination, some settled in Jalpesh Mahadeo, the present Jalpaiguri, and to escape detection, abandoned their religion and language and became fused with the aboriginal population. it is certain that Rangpur had Hindu colonists at a very early period of Indian History, because the Karatoya is mentioned in the *Māhābhārata* and the *Lohitya*—the portion of the Brahmaputra on the east boundary of the district is also alluded to. Moreover, the district long formed a part of Krauncha, according to Dr. Grierson, is equivalent to Krukta or 'recreant' indicating Kshatriya warriors who gave up their Vedic faith for the gods of hillmen." It is thus an unmistakable fact that Rājbamśī Ksatriyas have been traditionally calling themselves Ksatriyas and no scholar has failed to notice it.

Rājbamśī Ksatriyas claim that they are Paundra Ksatriyas. Traditions say that in the earliest period of Indian history a branch of Aryan tribe settled on both sides of the river Karatoyā. The settlers established a kingdom, later known as 'Paundradeśa', on the western bank of the river which perhaps extended upto river Kusi on further west. This tradition is well supported by *Mahābhārata* and *Harivamśa*²⁹. According to these writings the inhabitants of this *janapada* were known as 'Paundrakas' or *Bāleya Ksatriyas*. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* also mentions 'Pundradeśa' and 'Paundra jati'. The *Mahābhārata* and other *Puranās* considered 'Paundras' as *sujāta* or pure Ksatriyas.

The settlers on the other side of the river Karatoyā established another kingdom which extended over the Brahmaputra

29 According to *Mahābhārata*, Bāli, a king of eastern janapada, of lunar race, got five sons with the blessings of one Vedic Rsi Dīrghatamā, one of whom was known as Pundra, and after his name his kingdom was to be known as 'Paundradesa'.

অসৌ বজ : কলিঙ্গশ্চ পুণ্ড্র : সুক্শস্তুতে সূতা :

তেষাং দেশাঃ সমাখ্যাতাঃ স্বনাম কথিতা ভূবি ॥

—মহাভারত, ১৮ পর্ব, ১০ অধ্যায়।

According to *Harivamśa* .

মহামোগী সত্ত্ব বলিবভুব নৃপতি : পুবা ।

পুত্রানুৎপাদায়ামাস পঞ্চ বংশকবান ভূবি ॥

অঙ্গ প্রথমতো জন্তে বজ সুক্শস্তুথৈবচ ।

পুণ্ড্র : কলিঙ্গশ্চ তথা বালেশ ক্ষত্র উচ্যতে ॥

valley and became known as Kāmrupa or Prāgyjyotiṣpura. According to the *Mahābhārata* and the *Puranas* the kingdom was established by Naraka with the help of Śrīkṛṣṇa by defeating and driving out the Kirātas and Nisādas from the valley. *Kalika-Purana* also corroborates this story. At the time of the *Mahābhārata* Paundra Bāsudeva, the king of Paundradesa, Naraka, the king of Kāmrupa and his son Bhagadatta, who succeeded Naraka after his death, were very powerful kings. There are ample evidences to show that these eastern kings challenged not only the overlordship of northern and central Indian Aryan kings of *Kaurava*, *Pandava* and *Yādava* tribes but also the religious and spiritual leadership of Brāhmins of Arya-Vartya, the cradle of Brahminic culture. Paundra Bāsudeva drove out Śrī Kṛṣṇa from Mathurā who was forced to take shelter in Dwārakā, an island in the Arabian sea, and Paundra Bāsudeva himself assumed the name of Śrīkṛṣṇa, the incarnation of God thus challenging the spiritual supremacy of Arya-Vartya. Due to this traditional rivalry both in political and spiritual world north-western Aryan tribes despised their eastern counterparts and used to call them *Asuras* or in a later period they were designated as *Vrātyas* by Manu.³⁰ Rājamaṣī Kṣatriyas for generations were calling themselves and were also known as *Vrātya* or *Bhanga-Kṣatriyas*.

Rājamaṣī Kṣatriyas' traditions further claim that the great war of *Kuruksetra*, in fact an intra-Aryan tribal war, in which all powerful Aryan tribes joined on either side shattered the Kṣatriya power in Paundradesa. The subsequent rise of Buddhist power in Magadha gave a final blow to the Kṣatriyas living in Paundradesa. They were either killed or forced to give up their *dharma* accepting the Buddhist doctrines. Some fled away to Kāmrupa, and disguised themselves among the aborigines giving up their original faith, and subsequently became known as Rājamaṣī. There are many direct and indirect references to this tradition in Hindu *puranas* and *Tantras*. According to

30. *Manusamhitā*, Ch 10, slokas 43, 44, it says .

শনকৈস্ত ক্ৰিয়ানোপাদিমা : ক্লত্ৰিয়জাতযঃ ।

বৃষলজ্ঞং গতা লোকে ব্রাহ্মণাদর্শনে চ ॥ ৪৩

পৌণ্ড্রকাশ্যেদ্রবিভা : কাম্বোজা যবনাঃ শকাঃ ।

পারদাপহবাস্তীনা : কিবাতা দবদা : খশাঃ ॥ ৪৪

the *Visnu-Purāna* and the *Srimat-Bhāgvat Purānā*, after the fall of the Ksatriyas, Sudra Kings would rise to power in India, and a Sudra king of Magadha called Sri Mahāpadma Nanda would again annihilate the Ksatriyas like Parasurāma and be known as second Parasurāma.³¹ *Kālikā Purāna* says that in order to escape the slaughtering hand of Parasurāma some Ksatriyas took shelter in Jalpes, near modern Jalpaiguri, and continued to live there in disguise under the protection of Mahadeva.³² The *Bhrāmari-tantra* is more clear about this event. According to this tantra, the Ksatriyas who fled away from Paundradeśa for fear of Mahāpadma Nanda, the second Parasurāma, took shelter in *Ratnaputha*, or northern Kāmarupa came to be known as Rājyabamśī.³³ '*Kāmateswar Kulakārikā*' composed by Rupnarayan Srutidhara in Assamese language, a disciple of famous Vaisnava preacher Sankaradeva in Assam, also records this story of the Paundra Ksatriyas.³⁴

31. In this context *Srimat Bhāgvat* says .

মহানন্দীসূত : রাজন, শুভ্রাগশ্বেভাউবো বলী ।
মহাপদ্মপতি কশ্চিন্নন্দ : ক্ষত্রবিনাশকৃত ॥
ততো নৃপাভবিষ্যন্তি শূদ্র প্রায়ান্ত্রধাম্মিকাঃ ।
স একচ্ছত্রাং পৃথিবীম অনুলভিষ্যত শাসন : ।
শাশ্বতমিতি মহাপদ্মো দ্বিতীয় ভাগব ইতি ॥

and *Visnu-Purāna* mentions .

মহানন্দীসূত : শুভ্রাগশ্বেভাউবতি লুবেধ মহাপদ্মনন্দ : ।
পবন্ত্যম ইবাপরোহিতিল ক্ষত্রাজকাবী ভবিতা ॥

32. *Kālikā Purāna*, Ch. 77, Śloka 30, 31, it says,

জামদগ্ন্যভয়াস্তীতাঃ ক্ষত্রিয় পূর্বমেব য়ে ।
ম্লেচ্ছদ্বন্দ্বমুপাদায় জল্লীশং শবণং গতঃ ॥ ৩০
তে ম্লেচ্ছবাচ : সততমার্য্যবাচস্তু সর্বদা ।
জল্লীশং সেবমানান্তে গোপয়ন্তি চ তং হবম ॥ ৩১

33. *Bhrāmari-tantra*, 2nd. pāṭala, it mentions

নন্দীসূত ভয়াস্তীমে, পৌণ্ড্রদেশাদ্ সমাগতা ।
বর্দ্ধনস্য পঞ্চপুত্রা স্বগনৈর্বাক্রবৈঃ সহ ॥
বল্লপীঠঃ বিবাসন্তে কালাৎ বিপ্রবসগমাৎ ।
ক্ষত্রধর্মাদপক্ৰান্তা বাজবংশীতি খ্যাতাভূবি ॥

34. Relevant portion of *Kāmateswar Kulakārikā* says

ছিঁড়য়ে গলাব দতি ক্ষত্রচিহ্ন লুপ্ত কবি
প্রাণভয়ে ইতি উতি গলাস্ত সকলি ।
সংগ্রামক ভয় কবি ভঙ্গক্ষত্রি নাম ধবি
আপনাক মানৈ কেহ রাজবংশী বুলি ॥

No doubt, all these traditions lend support to the claim of the Rājbamśis to a Ksatriya status. On the basis of these, perhaps rightly, the Pandit samaj accorded them Ksatriya status. Many scholars including Risley³⁵ had to concede it, though indirectly. One such scholar puts it in this way: "They now claim to be regarded as Ksatriyas. This claim is not unreasonable when we find that similar foreign invaders, like the Sakas and Hunas, on being Hinduised became Rajput Ksatriyas in western and middle India."³⁶ Yet another scholar after discussing their claim, contends, "Thus the modern Rajbansis may claim to be descendants of ancient Kshatriyas with their old Aryan habits lost in Kali era."³⁷

From social considerations also one finds that there are certain practices prevalent among the Rājbamśi Ksatriyas which are in the nature of the characteristics of a Ksatriya caste. As for example, mourning period of a Ksatriya is of twelve days after the death of his father, mother or grandfather.³⁸ This custom was practised by many Rājbamśi Ksatriyas for generations although a section used to observe a thirty-day mourning period just like other non-Brahmin castes of Bengal and this is obviously a sudra practice. It had also been noticed that although Rājbamśi Ksatriyas gave up many vedic practices in order to escape detection, many Rājbamśi Ksatriyas, particularly of the upper class continued to wear sacred thread. They are traditionally followers of Viṣṇu and Śrī Kṛiṣṇa. They perform pujas of all important Hindu deities and religious functions just like sanskritised caste-Hindus. And that these practices were not of recent origin had been clearly stated by Hamilton as early as 1807 in his survey report.³⁹ No doubt, Rājbamśi Ksatriyas do have some customs peculiar to their own. In fact every caste has some peculiar customs and practices. We may mention here another religious practice followed by the people under discussion. This also characterises a Ksatriya caste. The Rājbamśi Ksatriyas

35. *op cit*, p

36. Dutta, N K., *Origin and Growth of Castes in India*, Vol II, 2nd. Ed., Calcutta, 1969, p 139

37. Sanyal, C C., *The Rajbansis of North Bengal*, The Asiatic Soc Monograph Series, Vol XI, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1965, p 19.

38. *Manu-Samhitā*, Ch 5, Sloka 83.

39. Martin, M., *op cit*, p 538.

perform Durga-Puja with due solemnity and grandeur as well indeed as performed by every Bengali Hindu. But on the day of *niranjana* i.e. Vijayā-dasamī they clean their household weapons such as sword, knife, axe etc and then sprinkle holy water of Ganges on them. The weapons are then placed at the feet of the Devi, then worshipped for the last time of the year before immersion in the evening in a nearby river. In this particular form of worship, known as '*Astra-puja*' the devotee prays for favour of the Devi in defeating the evil forces. No other Bengali Hindu castes perform this puja. In the Rāmāyana it is mentioned that Rāma after killing Rāvana with the help of weapons given by Devi (in *Chandi* form) put the weapons, after cleaning them, at the feet of the Devi and made a farewell worship. Perhaps the custom of '*astra--puja*' is a reminiscence of the event recorded in the *Ramayana* and is still observed by Rājbamśī Ksatriyas. The *gotra*-system, another peculiar institution of the Hindu society, had also been prevalent among the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas for generations. Some modern scholars insist that *gotra* is a new concept in the Rājbamśī Ksatriya community. This however does not seem to be true. The word *gotra* in their dialect is known as *got*. The Rājbamśī Ksatriyas were largely of *Kāsyapa gotra* although other *gotras* had also been prevalent among them. But it must be admitted that as they were socially backward, the *gotra* system was never practised by them strictly. Marriage within the same *gotra* had been permitted by the society. In modern times almost all important higher caste *gotras* obtain in the community.

The Rājbamśī Ksatriyas, following their own tradition, claim that they had been rulers of the land where they live now. Even today many sayings among them indicate this claim,⁴⁰ supported

40. A Rājbamśī Ksatriya mother often laments for her present plight as :

আগোৱে আছিল মল্লৰ মাতৃ ।

এলা গোবৰ ফেলেঞ্জা ভাত খাও ॥

(I was once a mother of a warrior, but now I am earning my livelihood by cleaning cowsheds)

Or a poor grocer remembers his glorious past as follows

বাজ গেইল পাট গেইল

গেইল মুখেৰে হাসি ।

নিতু দাড়িটা ধৰিয়া এলা

দোকান কৰি খাছি ॥

by many modern scholars as well⁴¹ The Rājamaśī Ksatriyas traditionally form a cultivators' class. They do not perform any works which have been characterised as jobs of the Sudras by the *Mānavdharmaśāstra*. According to the Vedic classification, cultivation of land is a profession meant for Vaisyas, the third category of *Chāturvarnya*. It is however not correct to say that agricultural profession is not befitting for Ksatriya caste. It is clearly stated by Parāśara⁴² and Manu⁴³, that in unusual circumstances or in Kali era each category of dwijas i. e, Brāhmanas, Ksatriyas and Vaisyas can take up the professions of respective lower categories. Moreover in describing the characteristics of the Paundra-Ksatriyas *Kulatantra* categorically states that the Paundras were agriculturists by profession⁴⁴

All these sayings, traditions, social customs and religious practices seem to point to their claim to Ksatriya origin. Thus their claim to a Ksatriya status seems to be very weighty and, therefore, cannot be readily dismissed.

As pointed out earlier, the term Koch when applied to designate a Rājamaśī Ksatriya, is as much resented and despised by him as is done by a Brāhman when he is called a Chandala. This needs some elucidation. There is no doubt today that the Rājamaśī Ksatriyas are as much distinct from the Kochs as are the Brāhmanas from the Kāyasthas or Nama-sudras. Social habits, customs, religious practices and most important of all—the traditions and even the racial characteristics of this people differ very much from those of the Kochas

There is no social intercourse between the two communities either. Caste is, by definition, a compact social unit governed by certain caste laws and the people belonging to a particular caste could not have any social intercourse with any other groups outside the caste barrier. In this sense, the Rājamaśī Ksatriyas

41. Dutta, N K, *op cit*, p 137, Hunter, W W, *op cit*, p 346, 353.

42. *Parāśara Samhitā*, Ch 2, Sloka 15, it says

কল্পিষ্যোপি কৃষিং কৃত্বা দ্বিজাম দেবাংশ্চপূজয়েৎ ।

বৈশ্যশূদ্রঃ সদা কুর্য্যাৎ কৃষিবাণিজ্য শিল্পকর্ম ॥ ১৫

43. *Manu Samhitā*, Ch 10, Slokas 81, 82, 95.

44. About Paundra Character *Kulatantra* says ·

দাতা বলী হিতে বতঃ সূমনা দেব সেবকঃ ।

কৃষিকর্মেপজীবী চ ষড়বিধং পৌণ্ড্রলক্ষনম্ ॥

form a distinct Hindu caste. Their traditions, as we discussed in the preceding pages point to their centre of origin around the bank of the river Karatoyā in north Bengal in the remote past. On the other hand the Koch tradition locates their centre of origin towards north east in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam where this tribe first consolidated its position under their leader Koch Hajo (≈1510 AD). They gradually spread towards north west and south establishing a Koch kingdom called Cooch Bihar with Biśwa Singha (Biśu) as their first recognised king who, according to their tradition, was a son of Lord Śiva, and his mother Hira Kochini an incarnation of Devī Pārvati. Koch kings and the people of the tribe used to call themselves *śivabamsi*. It is highly significant to note that the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas never accepted Koch kings as their kings and castemen. They believe that their royal power had been dislodged by the Koch kings. This explains, at least to some extent, intra-caste jealousy between the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas, the conquered and the Kochas, the conquerer

In recent times some scholars have tried to equate the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas with Kochas deriving their inferences from anthropometric data without giving due weightage to the traditional and social distinction between the two communities. Even then, these scholars have admitted the existing social distinction between them⁴⁵. It is curious to note that even anthropometric measurement gave contradictory findings. Risley⁴⁶, who took measurements of the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas of Rangpur and Dinajpur, the cradle of Rājbamśī Ksatriya culture, found them originating from Drāvidian stock with slight Aryan and Mongoloid admixture; on the other hand Waddell who concentrated his work in the Brahmaputra valley, the centre of dispersion of Koch tribe, characterised the Kochas as 'distinctly Mongoloid'.⁴⁷ Other scholars however consider the Rājbamśī Ksatriyas to be a separate distinct Hindu caste. As for example, M. Roy observes,⁴⁸ ... as a matter of fact and irrespective of any question as to identity

45. Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, p 80, 344-353, Martin, M., *op. cit.*, p 543

46. Risely, H. H., *op. cit.*, p 41-42

47. Waddell, L. A., *J Asiatic Soc Bengal*, Vol LXIX, Pt III, 1900, p 48-49

48. Roy, M., *J. Asiatic Soc. Bengal*, Vol LXXI, Pt III, 1902, p 50.

or difference of opinion, the Rajvamcis and Kochs form entirely distinct castes." Similar opinion has also been expressed by O'Malley, the census superintendent, in the census report of India (1911).⁴⁹

V

The Ksatriya movement made a tremendous impact on the socially and educationally backward Ksatriya community. It succeeded in bringing a revolutionary change in their social structure and outlook, and uplifting their caste status in the Hindu society. Sanskritization of the society has been completed. In modern times, westernization has penetrated deep into the society. They are now freely competing in every sphere of life with other castes and communities on an equal footing. This is perhaps the greatest achievement of the movement.

The impact and influence of the movement had been felt by other castes of the Hindu society. The Hindu society, however reluctantly had to admit the community to a decent status. The impact was so great that many other castes launched similar movements, though in a lesser scale. Many caste organisations were formed. Kaivartas of north Bengal demanded to be known as Māḥisya, Kāyasthas as Ksatriya, Tiya and other fishing community as Rājbamśī, Kochas as Koch-Ksatriya, Vaidyas as Brāhmaṇa, and Nama-sudras as Nama Brāhmaṇa. However these movements could not make much headway even among their own peoples, except perhaps in the case of the Chāsī Kaivartas whose caste status as Māḥisya has been, more or less recognised by the Hindu society.

The Ksatriya movement had its bad effect also. It created inter-caste tension and jealousy. But looking back, it seems that Rājbamśī Ksatriyas were right in launching this kind of movement, though in paper it looks narrow-minded and communalistic in approach. This was probably the necessity of the time. The movement re-activated the dying society and regenerated the vital force needed by a society which wanted not only to survive but to progress and prosper. One must admit that the movement has saved the community from total extinction. The Rājbamśī Ksatriyas have mastered the sanskritization and returned to the

49. O'Malley, L. S. S., *op. cit.*, p. 399.

Hindu society triumphantly with new zeal and vigour. It is hoped that with the spread of westernization, their too much caste consciousness would be lessened and liberal thinking would take its place. The net effect of the movement and the success of its leader Panchanan Barman can be summarised in the words of a scholar, "At a time when Rajbansis of north Bengal were going out of the Hindu fold and embracing other faiths, Babu Panchanan Burman of Rangpur raised the claim that the northern Rajbansis were Kshatriyas and advanced the above arguments. His claim was accepted by the pandits of Benaras. The Rajbansis began to take sacred thread and declared themselves as Kshatriyas. His contention may or may not be accepted by all scholars but it is certain that he saved the northern Rajbansis from leaving the Hindu fold and this was his greatest contribution to the Rajbansis as, a matter of fact, to the Hindu Society."⁵⁰

50. Sanyal, C. C , *op. cit* , p 19.

THE "IRREGULAR" SYSTEM IN THE BRITISH-INDIAN ARMY

ATFUL HYE SHIBLY

Before the mutiny, there were two descriptions of Indian forces—the regular and the irregular. Under the former system, a regiment had twentythree European officers and thirteen Indian commissioned (junior) officers. The number of other ranks varied in the three presidencies. Under the irregular system, a regiment had but three to five European officers, generally a commandant, a second in command, and an Adjutant. Besides the difference in numbers of European officers, the two systems also differed in other respects. In regular regiments, each troop or company was commanded by a European officer and though they had a large complement of officers, a large number of officers were withdrawn from their own regiments for political, civil and other employment. The officers of the irregular regiments were also drawn from the regular regiments,

The system of promotion among the Indian soldiers was also different in the two systems. In regular regiments, the sepoy enlisted as a private and rose to the non-commissioned rank by length of service in his regiment. For such promotion a knowledge of reading and writing in the vernacular was necessary. Under this system, the Indian soldiers held a very subordinate position, the troops and companies being commanded by European officers. One of the causes of the mutiny, Sir Hugh Rose thought, was the "glaring anomaly . . . (or other) injustice of old and of sometimes very deserving Native officers being commanded by very raw and inexperienced British officers fresh from school, young enough to be their grandsons ; only too often with no other title to superiority than their European nationality."¹ Promotions in the irregular regiments, on the other hand, were

1 Memorandum by Sir H. Rose (the C-in-C, British Indian Army, 1860-65), 7th October, 1861, *Military Proceedings*, December 1862, No. 539.

made by selection on the nomination of the commanding officer. The commissioned ranks were filled partly by direct appointment from the military class and partly by promotions from the non-commissioned ranks.

The irregular system first existed in the cavalry branch of the Indian army and was organised on a different footing. The men of these regiments supplied their own horses, accoutrements, clothing, and weapons (except firearms). They were, on this account, called 'Silladar'—one who bore arms. Each regiment of such description maintained a fund for replacement of horses, baggage animals, kit—called Chanda funds. Each soldier subscribed a monthly sum and was supplied with renewals as necessary. This was something like a system of insurance. Though these soldiers used to bring their own horses, later on it became common for recruits to bring not a horse, but the money value of one. In view of the above conditions the irregular or silladar cavalry were paid at quite different and higher rates than the regular regiments, because their pay had to take into account the upkeep and replacement of horses and kit. There was always a great competition for a vacancy in a good silladar regiment, and such vacancy or appointment was called an "Assami". The money to be paid for horse and kit was termed the price of the "Assami". When a man was discharged he handed over his horse and kit to the regiment and the price which he paid for his "Assami" was returned to him. In Bengal, the larger part of the Indian cavalry was, prior to the mutiny, organised on the irregular system. Out of 28 cavalry regiments, 18 were irregular and 10 regular. Some of these irregular regiments already existed before the mutiny, while some of them were hastily raised during the mutiny. In Madras and Bombay, on the other hand, the Indian cavalry was on the regular system, although three local regiments (Sind Irregular Horse) of the latter serving in Sind were placed on the irregular system.

The earliest silladar or irregular cavalry was the Mughal Horse, raised in 1760 by Major Calliaund. This force was composed of, and entirely officered by the Indians, who provided their own horses, arms and accoutrements. Four years later, as the strength of force increased three European officers were attached to it. After the Maratha war



(1803-1805), a large body of irregular horse which had served in the Maratha army had been taken into the British service. The most renowned of all these irregular horse was the corps commanded by Captain James Skinner, who also joined the British service from the Maratha army. In 1809, the whole of the irregular horse under the Government was commanded by Skinner. Another famous irregular horse was the Sind Irregular Horse, raised in 1839. It had a strength of 1,600 with only five European officers. The discipline in the irregular regiments was founded on the mutual pride, confidence, respect, and good feeling which existed between the Indian officers and men and their European officers. During the mutiny there was no uprising in the Sind Horse and the Indian officers behaved with "exemplary fidelity, as well as intelligence."² After the first Sikh war (1846), a local corps both of horse and foot was raised in the Punjab on the irregular system. This force was known as the Corps of Guides. In 1849, ten regiments, five of infantry and five of cavalry were also raised on the irregular system known as the Punjab Frontier Force and it was to this force that the Corps of Guides was later attached. These forces rendered great service during the mutiny in suppressing the revolt. After the mutiny, when the question of the reorganisation of the Indian army came before the Government, the Punjab Frontier Force was taken as a model for the whole of the Indian army.

During the mutiny, a large section of the Bengal army (Indian) revolted or disappeared and were disbanded. Of the eighteen irregular cavalry regiments, eight did not mutiny. These eight regiments later became the 1st to 8th Bengal cavalry. The remainder was replaced by the newly raised regiments on the irregular system. The success of these latter regiments and more particularly of the Punjab Force and the Sind Irregular Horse induced the Government both at home and in India to think of adopting irregular system for the whole of the Indian army.

The minutes of evidence taken before the Royal Army Commission of 1858 (under the chairmanship of General Peel, the

2. Papers received from H. B. Frere, Commissioner in Sind, 8th Nov., 1858, *Parliamentary Papers*, 1859, Vol. VIII, Sess. II, c. 2541 (Reorganisation of Indian Army), p. 701

Secretary of State for War) gave valuable information about the views and opinions of many officers, civil and military, serving in India, on the question of adopting irregular system for the whole of the Indian army

Sir G Clerk, the Governor of Bombay was in favour of having partly regular and partly irregular Indian regiments. Lieutenant General H Somerset, the Commander-in-Chief, Bombay Army, was, however, strongly against having any irregular regiment. He remarked that a regular regiment was, as a rule, better disciplined and more efficient in the field than irregular regiment. The reduction of European officers in an Indian regiment, Somerset argued, "would involve a loss of its discipline and general efficiency" and would throw "undue power" in the hands of the Indian officers³

Lord Clyde, the Commander-in-Chief, India, though he did not have any decided opinion on the question, was an admirer of the Punjab irregular system. Lord Canning, the Governor-General in a memorandum⁴ proposed to form twenty regiments of Bengal infantry (Indian) on the regular and thirty on the irregular system. Of Indian cavalry, however, Canning would have all on the irregular system. Lieutenant-Colonel Wilde,⁵ who had commanded the 4th Punjab irregular infantry for seven years, would have Indian regiments organised exclusively on the irregular system. He had also served for eleven years in the 19th Madras regular infantry. Wilde found that of the two, the irregular system was "certainly the best" and he proposed six European officers for all irregular regiments

Brigadier-General Jacob,⁶ Commandant-in-Chief, Sind Irregular Horse, was one of strongest advocates of the irregular system. He regarded the Indian officers as the "very nerves" of the whole body, the Indian soldiers as "bones and muscles", and the European officers as the "brains". Jacob considered four European

3 Replies of Somerset, 22nd July 1858, Appendix 69 to Royal Commission Report, 7th March, 1859, *Parliamentary Papers*, 1859, Vol V Session 1, c 2515 (Organisation of the Indian Army), pp 509-12

4. Memorandum by Canning, August 1858, Appendix. 55 to R C Report, *ibid*, pp 413-16

5 Evidence of Wilde, 26th August, 1858, *ibid*, pp. 129-32.

6. Papers recieved from Jacob, *ibid*, pp 723-39.

officers sufficient for an irregular regiment. The great number of European officers allowed to a regular regiment "prevents the native officer, whatever his merit, from attaining a responsible or very respectable position in the army thereby keeping out of its ranks natives of birth, wealth and family, and preventing in the native soldier the full development of that love for and pride in the service which are essential to great efficiency" Jacob called the irregular system the "commonsense system" and regarded the regular as the "foolish system which crushes the native soldier, and requires so many Europeans to render him useless." ⁸

The Royal Commission which submitted its report on the 7th March 1859, was of opinion that the irregular system should be adopted for the Indian cavalry. It proposed that the number of European officers of an irregular regiment should be—one Commandant, one Adjutant, one European officer per squadron, and a medical officer. In the regular cavalry at Madras and Bombay, the Commission did not, for the time being, recommend any change. Regarding infantry, its recommendation was mainly for regular, but allowed such number of regiments on the irregular system as the Governor-General and the Governor of the Presidencies would recommend.

In June 1859, the Military and Political Committee of the Council of India entirely approved of the recommendation made by Lord Canning in his memorandum of August 1858 with respect to Indian cavalry i.e., all Indian cavalry regiments of Bengal should be organised on the irregular system. But the committee could not come to a unanimous decision about the Bengal infantry—the majority members were in favour of irregular system and the minority in favour of partly regular and partly irregular system.

It was not until May 1860 that the home Government could give its attention towards reorganising the Indian forces. Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State for India, was in favour of having only irregular regiments for the whole of the Indian army. The only difficulty in carrying out such a measure, Wood thought,

7. Pelly, L., *The views and opinions of Brigadier-General John Jacob, C B*, London, 1858, p 121.

8. *ibid*, p 129

was to find a field from which the selection of officers for irregular regiments could be obtained. The system of withdrawal of officers from the regular regiments for irregular regiments and other employment almost destroyed the efficiency of the British-Indian army. Wood, however, soon found a solution to the officer problem in the formation of a Staff Corps—a body of officers specially selected for Indian service. The subalterns of the line regiments would be recruited to the Staff Corps and then they would be appointed, by selection, to the irregular regiments. By March 1860, Wood had definitely arrived at the decision to form a Staff Corps and now he was determined to have the whole of the Indian army on the irregular system. On 3rd March 1860 he wrote to Canning, "I am for officering the native Regiments, in the end, on the irregular system, as being both the cheapest and the best."⁹ The abolition of the local European army in May, 1860 further strengthened the case against the retention of the regular system. Wood also saw in the irregular system a "hope of improving the relations between British officers and their Indian troops...The careful selection of irregular officers would lay the basis of personal allegiance of soldiers to their leaders"¹⁰ Canning was, however, not convinced and was still in favour of preserving a regular element in the Bengal army (Indian). Sir H. Rose shared the views of the Governor General. He thought it more advisable to keep up both the system instead of depending only on one system i.e. the Irregular

In spite of the opinions of Canning and Rose, Wood had a very decided opinion and on 18th January 1861, he, being supported by the majority of his council, decided to have all Indian regiments on the irregular system with six European officers¹¹ Two reasons were given for adopting this course. Firstly, there was an "absolute necessity of a large reduction of the native army." Wood hoped that a "very considerable saving" would be effected "as nearly one-half the charge of a regular regiment consists of the pay and allowances of its officers".¹² After the mutiny because of the increased military charges, the restoration of financial

9. Wood to Canning, 3rd March 1860, *Wood Papers*, Letter Book No. 2

10. Moore, R. J., *Sir Charles Wood's Indian Policy*, Manchester, 1966, p. 222.

11. *Military Despatch to India*, No. 27, 18th January 1861.

12. *ibid.*

stability was the most pressing problem that Wood had to face. He estimated¹³ that no less than £330,000 per annum would be saved by substituting irregular for all regular regiments. The irregular system was, therefore, introduced more on financial grounds than on other considerations. Secondly, Wood also believed that the efficiency of the regiments will in no respect suffer, whilst an opportunity will be given of raising the character and position of the native officers, and, probably, of affording an opening for the employment of natives of higher position . . .”¹⁴

In 1861 orders¹⁵ were published reorganising the regiments of the Bengal army on the irregular system. Each regiment of cavalry was to consist of 420 *Sowars*, in six troops, with the following complement of Indian officers and soldiers :

3 *Risaldars*, on Rs. 300, 250, and 200 per month respectively.

3 *Risaidars*, on Rs. 150, 135, and 120 per month respectively.

1 *Wurdi-Major*, on Rs. 130 per month.

6 *Jamadars*, 2 each on Rs. 80, 70, and 60 per month.

6 *Kot-Dafadars*, each on Rs. 47 per month.

48 <i>Dafadars</i>		on Rs. 38 per month.
6 <i>Nishanbards</i>		

6 *Trumpeters*, on Rs. 34 per month.

420 *Sowars*, on Rs. 27 with good conduct pay to the extent of Rs. 3, making the maximum pay of *Sowars* to Rs. 30 per month. Each regiment of infantry was to consist of 600 privates, in eight companies, with the following complement of Indian officers and men .¹⁶

8 *Subahdars*, 2 each on Rs. 100, and 80, and 4 each on 67 per month.

8 *Jamadars*, 4 each on Rs. 35 and 4 each on Rs. 30 per month.

40 *Havildars*, on Rs. 14 per month

40 *Naiks*, on Rs. 12 per month.

16 Drummers		on Rs. 7 per month.
600 Privates		

13 *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, CLXXVIII, Speech by Wood in the House of Commons, 2nd May 1865, Col. 1338.

14 *Military Despatch to India*, No. 27, 18th Jan. 1861.

15. *Govt of India General Order*, No. 494, 31st May 1861.

16. *ibid.* No. 400, 3rd May 1861

While the new organization was given effect to in Bengal and Bombay army by 1862, the home Government had to face strong opposition from the Madras government. William Denison, Governor of Madras, was strongly against introducing the irregular system in the Madras army, as Madras never had any experience of the irregular regiments. Denison was against placing Indian officers in position of trust and responsibility. He argued :

“If, however, we submit them (Indian soldiers) to a course of training ; if we place them in command of companies, and strive to make them really effective as company officers , if they are to lead their troops in action, and get thus knowledge and self-confidence, we shall find that we have raised up a class of men more dangerous than useful ”¹⁷

Wood was not at all happy about the stiff attitude taken by the Madras Government and he could not but express his displeasure in a letter to Denison when he wrote . “I do not see that any good would come of reversing all that we have done as to army matters. It was well-considered and I cannot go back on anything now settled”.¹⁸

By November 1863, excepting four regiments of cavalry and forty regiments of infantry in the Madras army, the whole of the Indian army was organised on the irregular system. The term “irregular” was discontinued,¹⁹ for it was thought to imply a looseness in what was a simple but firmly disciplined organisation. Earlier in October, the Government published a General Order giving the pay and the designation of the six European officers (exclusive of a medical officer) of an Indian regiment on the irregular system. For cavalry regiments, there were to be a Commandant (Rs. 700 per month), a second in command, also commanding a Squadron (Rs. 300), a Senior Squadron Officer (Rs. 210), a Junior Squadron Officer (Rs. 180), an Adjutant (Rs. 250), and a Doing Duty Officer (Rs 150) For infantry Regiments, there were to be a Commandant (Rs 600), a Senior Wing Commandant (Rs 270), a Junior Wing Commandant (Rs 230), an Adjutant

17. Minute by Denison, 1863, *Military Proceedings*, August 1865, No. 298.

18. Wood to Denison, 10th July 1861, *Wood Papers*, Letter Book No. 8.

19. *Military Despatch to India*, No. 424, 9th November, 1863.

(Rs 200), a Quarter Master (Rs. 150), and a Doing Duty Officer (Rs 100).

The irregular system worked very successfully and the Government after observing the success for long fifteen years did not recommend any change when the whole question of the Indian army was reviewed in 1876. In fact, no major changes were made until the end of the first World War.

So far as the European officers were concerned, the introduction of the irregular system was undoubtedly an improvement on that previously maintained. Instead of a nominal aggregate of 23 officers, who were struggling to escape from their regimental duties, there were six or seven officers present with their regiments and who in point of pay and rank had every reason to be satisfied with their condition. But as regards the Indian officers and men, the system did not go far in improving either their conditions or their status. Though the 'duties connected with troops and companies were assigned to them, they could not rise above the rank of *Subahdar-Major* (seniormost *Subahdar*) in the infantry and *Risaldar-Major* (seniormost *Risaldar*) in the cavalry. Moreover, before the mutiny, an Indian officer in the irregular cavalry could rise to the command of a squadron which was, under the new system, commanded by British officers. One of the reasons for preferring the irregular to regular system had been to raise the character and position of the Indian officers by affording an opening for the employment of Indians of higher position. But in practice, this intention was not wholly fulfilled. Thus Sir Charles Wood's wish "to see natives rise to positions of responsibility (was) a dead letter in the army".²⁰

20. Opinions of various selected officers on the system of officering the Native Army (confidential), *India Papers*, 31413/29, pp. 530-36.

CALLIGRAPHER'S TOOLS AND MATERIALS

P. I. S. M. RAHMAN

Before a calligrapher begins his practice in calligraphic writing he has to learn the technique of preparing pen (qalam), paper, ink etc. and of using them effectively in accordance with the nature of the script he chooses to practice. To prepare a pen he first needs a pen-knife.

A pen-knife has to be sharp and its "blade should be neither long nor short, neither wide nor narrow but appropriate so that it should penetrate into the inside of the qalam."¹

The qalam is made of a kind of reed. The best kind of reeds used to come from Hilla and Wasit in Mesopotamia. According to Fath Allah several kinds of reeds for making qalam were imported in the sixteenth century from Wasit, Amol, Egypt and Mazandaran. A kind of reed came from Shiraz. They grow in abundance in India as well.

Some people preferred the reeds grown on rocky ground, others those grown along the seashore. A reed which between its two knots shows less thickenings, has the firmest flesh, the hardest bark and is well-proportioned, is chosen for preparing the pen.

After being harvested they are put to soak in bundles in marshes where they grow, and thus they acquire a deep brown colour. When they are dried they become hard and fit for making into pens. But their colour must not be black and they should not be either too hard or too soft. There are reeds of all thicknesses from which pens can be prepared in accordance with the needs of the styles of writing. Although strong enough for writing purposes, they are exceedingly brittle and will not bear pressure like a modern metal pen.² Abu Haiyan sums up,

1. Qāḍī Aḥmad, *Calligraphers and painters*, Minorsky's Translation, Washington, 1959, p. 117.
2. *Studia Semitica et Orientalia*, Glasgow, 1920, Ibn Abd al-Raḥmān, p. 76. Qāḍī Aḥmad, pp. 111-112, and footnote 363, *Oriental Penmanship* by E. H. Palmer, London, 1889 p. 31; *From the world of Arabic papyri* by A. Grohmann, Cairo, 1952, p. 63.

"The best calamus (qalam) is the one which had been able to ripen in its body; the water of which dried up in its rind, which is cut after throwing of its seeds, the pith of which is tough, and the bulk of which is heavy"³

The method of holding the pen-knife and cutting the pen .

One should begin by laying the knife down flat, grasping the knife at the point where its *jilfa* (the point where the blade of the knife begins to fall away from the thickness at the haft) begins. The fingers should close tightly on it as if grasping the bow. The thumb is put on the back of the knife. Then the edge of the knife is applied to the part contiguous to the tip of the pen⁴. The reed should be placed on the fleshy part of the left thumb⁵.

The cutting of the qalam consists of four processes, 1 *Fath* (the initial cutting), 2 *shaqq* (the splitting), 3 *naht* (paring), 4. *qatt* (pointing).

As for *fath*, which means opening or initial cutting, if the reed is tough the hollowing is done deeper, if it is soft, less deep and if medium, the hollowing should be in between.⁶ Sulāṭān Alī says that the first cutting may not turn out well, but there should not be any mutilation so that the second cutting may be good.⁷ He advises to cut middlewise but never slantwise. There must not be any sound while cutting the qalam because, he thinks, this sound is the cry of its pain.⁸

Al-naht, which means paring, is of two kinds, that of the sides and that of the core. As to the *naht* of the sides, it is necessary to have it equal on both sides. The pith of the reed in the core should also be evenly distributed.⁹

Al-Shaqq, which means splitting, should be central to the *jilfa* (notch) whether it be thin or thick. The *shaqq* varies according to the nature of the reeds. If it is tough the greater

3. Abu Haiyan, *Ars Islamica*, 1948, p. 9

4. *Studia*. Ibn Abd al-Rahman, p. 77

5. *Oriental Penmanship*, *op. cit.* p. 4

6. *Studia*: Ibn Abd al-Rahman, p. 77, Abu Haiyan, p. 4.

7. Qādi Ahmad, *op. cit.* p. 115.

8. *ibid.*

9. *Studia*: *op. cit.* p. 77; Abu Haiyan, *op. cit.* p. 4.

part of the *jilfa* is cleft, if soft one third of the *jilfa* is cleft, and if medium, a mean should be taken between them. Some split the *julla* from its sides and some from its core, but so long as it is central it does not matter¹⁰ The splitting and pointing of the nib are usually done by placing it on a *miqatt*, which means a kind of cutting board made of hard wood or ivory or bone or silver.

Al-qatt, which means the cutting of the point of the nib, is the crux of the procedure.¹¹ For cutting the point the pen is placed on its back on the *miqatt*. The *miqatt* should be round, not square or hexagonal, lest the pen is placed on one side of the edges and spoilt in the process of cutting. The cutting of the point is done in different ways, oblique, even, upright and inclined. The best is the oblique one with a medium slant. This produces a fine and elegant handwriting. Some people prefer the roundness of the point. To achieve this one should hold the knife evenly and should not lean toward any side in the least. This produces a bold and clear handwriting. Ibn al-Bawwab says that the point should be something between oblique and round.¹² The upright method consists in perfect evenness of the rind and the pith. The pointing which is inclined in its relation to either the pith or the rind, is not recommended.¹³

The style of calligraphy actually determines how a pen should be cut. For very thin and elegant writing it is cut obliquely, for a medium kind of writing it is cut accordingly

When a pen is properly cut and ready for writing "it should ring like the ringing of the Mashriqi's sword." Mashriqi was a man who used to make swordblades known for their excellency. If the blade of such a sword was set in motion, it vibrated and a ringing of extreme acuteness should be heard. "Therefore, it is best that the end of the qalam should be cut at an angle and the point of the be qalam long and fleshy and

10 *ibid*

11. Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddima*. Vol II Rosenthal's Translation, London, 1958, p. 388,

12. *ibid* p 389.

13. *Studia : op. ctt.* p. 78, Abu Haiyan, *op. cit.* p. 5; *Oriental Penmanship, op. cit.* p. 4.

when it is put to paper it should vibrate and a ringing be heard."¹⁴

One may try out a qalam with a dot. If the dot comes out regular from the qalam, then it is quite fit.¹⁵

The handling of the pen :

The Shaikh 'Imād al-Dīn ibn al-'Afīf says, "The three fingers, middle, fore and thumb, should be evenly spread out, without gripping, at the start of the cut part (*fath*) and as far as possible from the commencement of the inky part (*madāda*) so that the writer may secure complete mastery over the will of the pen. He should not apply any violent pressure to the pen nor yet grasp it with too light a hand ¹⁶

"The pen should not be kept in an inky condition but should only be so when in use in writing, and the *Iqa* (the wad of unspun silk or cotton-wool inserted in the ink-holder to absorb the ink. It prevents ink spilling, and is an effective safeguard against blotting since it does not permit of an excess of ink adhering to the pen) should be wiped with the face of the pen.¹⁷

The preparation of ink :

There are various recipes and methods of preparing ink. Only a few examples will be given here. The usual ingredients of ink are soot, vitriol, gallnuts, indigo, powder of barley or rice and water. To make ink deep black rock alum is used instead of vitriol. According to Sulṭān 'Alī, for one *sir* of soot four *sirs* of good gum, and for one *sir* of vitriol two *sirs* of gallnuts, are required.¹⁸ Another authority says, "Take equal weights of soot and alum, a double weight of gallnuts, a threefold weight of gum."¹⁹

Good soot can be obtained from a lamp filled with hemp oil. It may be collected in an earthen pot, i.e. by covering the lamp with a pot that will collect the soot. Then soot is put into a paper which is covered with flour paste and placed in a hot

14. Qādi Aḥmad, *op. cit* pp 57-58

15. *ibid* p 116

16. *Studia* · *op cit*, p. 79.

17. *ibid* p. 80 and footnote 76.

18. Qādi Aḥmad, *op cit* p 112.

19. Qādi Aḥmad, *op. cit* p 199.

oven of burnt brick. It is kept in the oven until the dough is cooked and the oiliness removed from the soot. Then the soot is taken out of the paper.

Some clean and strong gum arabic should be mixed with as much water as necessary to make it like honey. For this purpose the gum and water should be whipped together and left for a day or two with occasional whipping. Then this prepared gum is mixed up with the prepared soot. This mixture is stirred as long as necessary to make it like a paste.

Some minced gallnuts are put in a vessel filled with a tenfold quantity of water. To this one drum of the leaves of henna, one drum mu leaves (Meum Athamanticum) half a drum of indigo and half a drum of aftimun (Cuscuta Epithymum) are added. Then this mixture is kept for 24 hours. Then it is boiled until the gallnut water becomes such that it does not spread on paper. The whole is then strained through a good piece of linen. Thus the gallnut water is filtered. Afterwards some cyprus alum is dissolved and filtered and then added to the prepared gallnut water. After a day this gallnut water is filtered again so that no sediment remains in it.

Some of it is then mixed with the prepared mixture of soot and gum arabic in a mortar and pounded vigorously. Afterwards some moistened indigo and aloe are added to it. The whole thing is pounded again and then left for 100 hours. After that period some Indian salt and Egyptian sugar are added to it.

Then little by little the rest of the prepared mixture of alum and gallnuts is poured into the mortar, triturating and testing, until it acquires a certain degree of excellence. Then it is taken out of the mortar and strained through silk. Afterwards half a drum of Tibetan musk and one *muthqāl* of saffron are dissolved in ten drums of extremely pure rose water. This mixture is added to the ink and then it is ready for use. This is described as *Samghī*, i.e. prepared with gum.

Another recipe for *Samghī* ink :

Some lamp-black is put into a mortar and pounded vigorously until it becomes very shiny. Some filtered gum arabic which is neither

thick nor thin is poured into the mortar little by little. Then it is rubbed carefully until it becomes strong. Afterwards a little candy or sugar and salt with rose-water are mixed with it. After a night this mixture is stirred up carefully and poured into a bottle and it is ready for use.

The recipe and the method of preparing *nishastaqi* i.e. Strachy ink :

Some wheat starch is put into a copper pot and baked on a low fire until it becomes black. One has to be very careful not to burn it. Then it is trituated.

Some gallnuts are put into water and dissolved. Then this gallnut water is filtered. It is mixed with the prepared wheat starch gradually. Then the whole mixture is put on the fire to boil. Afterwards it is strained. Then some alum is added to it and it is ready for use²⁰

Sometimes precious manuscripts are written with gold instead of ink. The process of gold preparation is as follows :

For each gold leaf usually four drops of gum are used. Gold leaf is crushed at the bottom of a vessel and not on its sides. It is rubbed in between three or four fingers. If the hand grows dry during this process it can be moistened with a little water. This process of crushing up gold should not last more than two or three hours because it may be loosened. When it is soft and there remain no filaments in it, the vessel is filled with water up to its four-sixths. When the gold is washed off the hands and the sides of the vessel it comes down to the vessel's bottom. The vessel is then covered with a paper. It should never be left uncovered. After an hour or two water is poured off the gold. Then the vessel is put on the fire to dry but not for long. Then a few drops of black glue are added to it and it is rubbed again. For half a day water is poured on it so that it becomes so shiny as to reflect one's face. Then it is ready for use.

A polisher made of shell should be immediately applied to the written surface of the paper or wall. If the colour of this gold is blackish, some water is added to it.²¹

20. Qāḍī Ahmad, *op. cit.* pp. 112, 119-200.

21. *ibid.* p. 197.

Blue ink is made of lazulite mixed with water, to which a little solution of gum is added.²²

Ink is kept in a *dawāt*, which means a kind of inkpot, usually made of porcelain, with a lid. Professor Grohmann has confused *dawāt* and *mihbarah*. According to him *dawāt* is a writing case and *mihbarah* is an inkpot.²³ But actually *mihbarah* is the writing-case in which all the writing materials, such as the pen-knife, *miqatt*, i. e., the cutting-board, the pen-wiper, whetstone for sharpening the pen-knife, and *misqat*, i. e. instrument made either of the shell of a seasnail or of copper for pouring water into the inkpot, are kept. Even the *dawāt* itself and some papers ready for writing are also kept in the *mihbarah*. So *mihbarah* cannot be inkpot.

Some undressed silk fibres (*liqa*), or if this is not available, a piece of rag or soft sponge sufficiently large to absorb nearly all the ink, should be placed in the *dawāt*. This only prevents clots of ink being taken up into the pen, but prevents the pen itself from being damaged by contact with the bottom of the *dawāt*. Ink is taken into the pen by simply pressing it on the saturated silk or sponge.²⁴

The Preparation of Paper .

Paper of different qualities such as silk-paper, note-paper, strong and weak paper, smooth and ribbed paper, white and coloured paper etc were in use in the Muslim World. Paper was made in or cut into different sizes. Generally it had four sizes, namely, full (*jāmi*), half (*ansāf*), quarto (*arba*), and octavo (*athmān*).²⁵

Sultān 'Alī says, "There is no paper better than Chinese."²⁶ Paper from Samarqand is second best. According to another authority first class paper comes from Damascus, India and Baghdad. Samarqand paper has been given the fourth place. Sultān 'Alī again says, "There is no better paper than that of the Chinese paper, there is no need for you to test, writing on it

22 *The World of Papyri*, op cit., p 68

23. *ibid* pp 66-67.

24 *Oriental Penmanship*, op cit , p 5.

25 *Studies Islamic and Oriental* by Qazī Ahmad Mian Akhtar, Lahore, 1945, p 103.

26 Qādi Ahmad, op. cit. p. 113.

is good ; it is also good for gold ; it is excellent and it embellishes good writing."²⁷

The paper should be clean and white. A slightly tinted paper is also good because it is soothing to the eye. The red, green and white colours strike the eyes. Darkish colours suit coloured writing. On red and blue papers writing should be in white.²⁸ Papers were coloured red with ochre, the diluted lac of the lacinsect or with bolus. The red-pink ones were coloured with a decoction of Brazil wood, the blue ones were coloured with indigo, cobalt or aloe, yellow ones were coloured with safranin or a decoction of lemon-peel (cortex limonis). Moreover, there were oil-green, violet-blue and seed-green papers which were coloured with a mixture of blue and yellow dye, blue and red dye, or safranin and verdigris.²⁹

The paper must be polished before use so that no creases appear in it. The board for polishing paper is wiped clean with a strong hand.³⁰

The polisher is made of stone or an oyster or mussel-shell.

In some parts of the Islamic World a solution of zinc oxide was applied to the paper before polishing³¹ But usually paper used to be saturated with a starchy compound called *āhār-paste* before polishing.³²

The *āhār* is prepared from starch. First a paste is made of starch and then with water it is boiled on the fire for a moment. Then some glue is added to it. Finally it is strained. It should be neither too thick nor too thin. The paper is slightly moistened before the application of *āhār*. Paper must not move when *āhār* is spread on it.

27 *ibid.*

28. Qāḍi Ahmad, *op. cit.* p. 113.

29. *From the World of papyri*, *op. cit.* pp. 56-57.

30. Qāḍi Ahmad, *op. cit.* p. 114.

31. *Studies. Islamic and Oriental*, *op. cit.* p. 105.

32. Qāḍi Ahmad, *op. cit.* p. 114.

BOOK REVIEW

ROOTS OF SEPARATISM IN NINETEENTH CENTURY BENGAL, by Amalendu De, Ratna Publications, Calcutta, 1974

In this book Professor Amalendu De analyses the roots of separatism between the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal in the 19th century with special reference to socio-economic and demographic factors. The author has paid special attention to such aspects of communal differences which did not arise as a result of the British Policy. According to the writer the poverty of the Muslims was more responsible for differences than religious zeal.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first part he has delineated the main arguments bearing on the subject within an analytical and exploratory framework. The second part contains exhaustive notes and references while the third part contains some valuable appendices.

Muslims ruled Bengal before the advent of the British. Bereft of their privileges and special advantages they found it difficult to make satisfactory adjustment with British Rule. Titumir's revolt and the Farazi movement generated a hostile attitude towards the Muslims. This was strengthened by the revolt of 1857 for which Muslims were held primarily responsible. Hindus had been required to learn a foreign language like Persian during Muslim rule for securing employment under the Government. When English replaced Persian they took zealously to learn English. The dislike that Hindus had for Persian made them eager to learn English. Muslims believed that it was improper to separate education from religion. The system of education introduced by the British made no provision for the religious instruction of the Muslim youth.

The author has drawn attention to the paper read in 1869 by Rev Long before Bengal Social Sciences Association where he drew attention to the fact that Muslims were not adequately represented in Government Services and suggested that due consideration should be given to the knowledge of Persian possessed by Muslim candidates. Unfortunately his advice was not heeded. As a matter of fact till the second decade of this century no quota for Muslims in Government services was fixed.

In 1880 Nawab Amir Hossain, President, Central National Mohamedan Association had suggested setting up of a separate degree college for Muslims in Calcutta in a locality where most of the Muslims lived. Sir Ashley Eden, the Lt. Governor however rejected the proposal. Islamia College was started after 45 years of that date. Had Nawab Amir Hossain's suggestion been acceded to, Muslims might not have lagged so much behind in English education.

The author has successfully controverted the theory zealously propagated by Dewan Fazle Rubbee that a high percentage of Muslims in Bengal were descendants of immigrants from Middle East. Bengali Muslims suffer from an inferiority complex and try to claim descent from aristocrats of Iran and Turkestan. Even in this century certain families adopted surnames like Suhrawardy, Guznavi, Bokhari, Abbasi, Siddeki etc. which had not been claimed earlier. It has to be remembered that immigrants who came in 13th and 14th centuries did not, on account of arduousness of journeys and the observance of purdah system, bring their wives with them. It is well known that after revival of Hinduism during Sena Rule Buddhists en masse became Muslims. This can explain preponderance of Muslims in Rajshahi and Bogra which contains centres of Buddhism like Paharpur and Mahasthan. After introduction of Kulinism by Ballal Sen, the lower caste Hindus who were oppressed by Brahmins became anxious to embrace Islam whose democratic spirit had great fascination for them.

The author deserves our thanks for his boldness in pin pointing the effect of Permanent Settlement on the Muslim peasantry of Bengal. The Rent Laws of 1859 and 1885 did not ameliorate the condition of the peasants. According to Prof. N.K. Sinha the Permanent Settlement did the greatest long term mischief by reducing the long standing tenant to the position of a tenant at will. Yet an able and perceptive author like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee came to the conclusion that the grievances of the tenants had been remedied by the amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act in 1885.

Leaders of Indian Nationalism like Nabagopal Mitra and his co-workers cannot escape censure as their propaganda took the shape of Hindu revivalism. In their patriotic songs and

festivals like *Sivaji Utsav* they were oblivious of the fact that since 1881 Muslims were the majority community in Bengal. Rajnarain Basu, maternal grand father of Aurobinda, who is called a sage was very anxious to prove superiority of Hinduism over other religions

One of the causes of Muslim's backwardness in English education was the fact that the doors of the Hindu College were barred against the Muslims. This injustice was pointed out by Sir Charles Grant who said "A great error of principle was committed by Government when it undertook to carry out chiefly at its own cost an expensive college exclusively for one sect. The best means to get out of the error was to give to the Mohamedan college as good an education as we give to the Hindu College. Against anything short of this, injustice to the Mohammedans I protest."¹

It appears from extracts of a speech by Nawab Nawab Ali Chowdhury that in the nineties of the last century some Muslims in Mymensing, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dacca and Jalpaiguri had become Brahmos

The book has thrown a flood of light on certain vital aspects of Hindu-Muslim relations. It might be worthwhile to draw attention to certain minor inaccuracies.

At p. 45 the author has referred to the spread of Pan Islamic ideas by Jamaluddin Afghani during his visit to Calcutta in 1881-82. Of course the speech delivered by Afghani in Albert Hall had a great impact on Bengali Muslims. Blunt has referred to the veneration with which Calcutta Muslims regarded Afghani. Bepin Pal in his autobiography has also ascribed the spread of Pan Islamic ideas to Afghani's visits. But it should not be forgotten that Sultan Abdul Hamid had started a weekly Urdu *Payak-Islam* for propagation in India. Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy while a student in London had organised a Pan Islamic Society. The statement at p. 95 to the effect that Afghani had founded a Pan Islamic Society at Mecca and his object was to create one Caliph for the whole Muslim world would not stand scrutiny.

1 *The Bengali Muslims and English Education* M F Rahman p. 61.

At p. 91 the writer says that there is difference of opinion about the year of foundation of Central National Mohammedan Association. Syed Amir Ali the founder Secretary has stated in his memoirs, "Perceiving the complete lack of political training amongst the Muslim inhabitants of India I founded in 1877 the National Mohammedan Association". The name of Association was later changed to "Central National Mohammedan Association". The earlier organisation founded by Nawab Amir Hussain in 1856 was also called National Mohammedan Association.

At p. 16 the author names Nawab of Dacca as one of the few families which survived the sun-set law of Permanent Settlement. But this Zemindari was founded in the beginning of 19th century by the father of Nawab Abdul Gani as stated in 'Twelve men of Bengal' by F. B Bradley Birt and other writers.

At p. 14 the author names Moulvi Naimuddin as the first translator of the Quran in Bengali language. That distinction belongs to Bhai Girish Chandra Sen (1834-1910) who translated the Quran in 1886. Moulvi Naimuddin only published translation of 23 paras (Chapters). The second Bengali translator of the holy book was Moulvi Abbas Ali of 24 Parganas.

The appendices have supplied a good deal of information useful for the study of separatism. The comments made earlier do not minimise the importance of the book which is a valuable addition to historical literature on Hindu Muslim relations. Ratna Publications deserves our thanks for making such a useful publication available to the public.

—Syed Murtaza Ali

AN ELEVENTH CENTURY HISPANO-ARABIC SOURCE FOR
ANCIENT INDIAN SCIENCES AND CULTURE, by M. Saber
Khan, Member, Public Service Commission, West Bengal, Calcutta,
1975.

This is a little Monograph based on a chapter, dealing with sciences, religions and culture of India, of *Tabaqāt al Umam* (*categories of Nations*), an Arabic History of science and culture by Abu'l Qāsim Sā'id bin 'Abdur-Rahmān bin Muhammad bin Sā'id al-Andalusī, briefly called Qādī Sā'id. This has been published in the *Studies in the foreign relations of India* pp. 357-389.

The writer has also published the Arabic text from the already printed editions of the *Tabaqāt al-Umam* but added to it a valuable and critical notes and given an English Translation.

The monograph has been divided into seven items. 1. Introduction 2. The sciences of India (English Translation of the Chapter). 3. Arab writer's knowledge of India. 4. Written sources of a Chapter from *Tabaqāt al Umām* 5. Its Merits 6. Its Demerits 7. Bibliographical notes. The Arabic text is given at the end.

In the Introduction the writer deals with the brief Bibliography of Qādī Sā'id and examines the different titles, contents and edition of his *Tabaqāt al Umām*. English Translation of the chapter with critical notes follows the Introduction.

The writer then traces the Indo-Arab relations beginning from Pre-Islamic times and discusses the extents and limits of the Arab authors' knowledge of India. He also briefly comments on different Arab authors who wrote about India.

Most of the Arab writers who wrote about India had their works based on informations gathered either directly from travelling and staying in India or from original Sanskrit sources or translations thereof. Qādī Sā'id mentions only two books as sources of his informations about India. They are *Kitāb al Ulūf* of an Arab astronomer Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī and a book containing the astronomical tables (*Zij*) entitled *Nazm al 'Iqd* compiled by Ibn al-Ādamī. Qādī Sā'id evidently had no knowledge

of Sanskrit and the Arabic translations of different Sanskrit works were not easily available to him in distant Spain. So he had his works based mainly on secondary sources. But a careful comparison of the contents of this chapter with the accounts of Indian religions, sciences and culture given by the Arabic authors who flourished before Qāḍī Sā'id shows that he might have based his account of India on some of these works. Broad, tolerant and objective attitude, avoidance of myths and legends in writing history, and above all a very keen interest in Indian religions and culture are cited as some of the merits of Qāḍī Sā'id's work. The demerits of his works are also pointed out. "The whole chapter is sketchy and scanty information about Indian theology, sciences and culture has been provided some of which were quite superficial, vague and general". Thus having considered its merits and demerits in some detail the writer came to the conclusion "Qāḍī Sā'id had limited genuine but general knowledge of some aspects of the religions and sciences of ancient India although it was not so deep as that of al-Bīrūnī". Comparison of Qāḍī Sā'id with al-Bīrūnī is not fair because unlike al-Bīrūnī he neither came to India nor he had any access to original Sanskrit sources. Yet the work of Qāḍī Sā'id may prove to be very important so far as it transmitted some information about Indian sciences and culture to Europe. So "a thorough investigation has to be carried out in order to prove satisfactorily and conclusively whether or not this book served as a link in the process of transmission of some elements of Indian culture to Europe or at least creating an interest in them in the west".

The Bibliographical notes are most exhaustive and valuable for research scholars. Especially important are the notes on different aspects of Indian sciences, culture and religions as they indicate all the available Sanskrit, Arabic and Modern sources.

—P. I. S. M. Rahman.

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TRANSLITERATION OF THE SANSKRIT, ARABIC AND ALLIED ALPHABETS

In order that contributors to Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh may adopt a uniform system of the diacritical marks in translitering non-European alphabets the following table of signs, approved by the International Congress of Orientalists and used in most countries of the world, is published as a general guide. Manuscripts offered for publication by the Society should be prepared in close and uniform approximation of this table.

I.

SANSKRIT AND ALLIED ALPHABETS.

अ a	ओ o	ट ṭ	ब b
आ ā	औ au	ठ ṭh	भ bh
इ i	क k	ड ḍ	म m
ई ī	ख kh	ढ ḍh	य y
उ u	ग g	ण ṇ	र r
ऊ ū	घ gh	त t	ल l
ऋ ṛ	ङ ṅ	थ th	व v
ॠ ṝ	च c	द d	श ś
ऌ ḷ	छ ch	ध dh	ष ṣ
ॡ ḹ	ज j	न n	स s
ए e	झ jh	प p	ह h
ऐ ai	ञ ñ	फ ph	ळ ḷ

˙ (Anusvāra) . . . m	ṣ (Avagraha) . . . '
˘ (Anunāsika) . . . ṁ	Udātta ˆ
ː (Visarga) ḥ	Svarita ˜
× (Jihvāmūlīya) . . ḥ	Anudātta ˘
⌘ (Upadhmanīya) . . ḥ	

II.

ARABIC AND ALLIED ALPHABETS.

ا at beginning of word omit;	ك k	آ ā
elsewhere ʾ or ʿ	ل l	ی i
ب b	س s	م m
ت t	ش . s or sh	ن n
ث . t or th	ص . s or z	و . w or v
ج . j or dj	ض d, dz, or z	ه h
ح h	ط t	ی y
خ . h or kh	ظ z	و u
د d	ع ʿ	و u
ذ . d or dh	غ . g or gh	و u
ر r	ف f	و u
ز z	ق q	و u

DIPHTHONGS.

اَی ai

اَؤ au

wasla ʾ

VOWELS.

hamza ʾ or ʿ

silent t h

letter not pro-

nounced ʾ

ADDITIONAL LETTERS.

PERSIAN, HINDI, AND PASHTŪ	TURKISH ONLY	HINDI AND PASHTŪ.	PASHTŪ ONLY
پ p	ک when pro-	ت or پ . t	خ ts
چ . c or ch	nounced as	ڈ or د . . d	ر r
ژ . z or zh	g k	ر or ر r	ن n
گ g	ک ħ		ش ksh

III

BENGALI ALPHABET

অ . . . a	ক . . . k	ঠ . . . th	ব . . . b
আ . . . ā	খ . . . kh	ড . . . ḍ	ভ . . . bh
ই . . . i	গ . . . g	ঢ . . . ḍh	ম . . . m
ঈ . . . ī	ঘ . . . gh	ণ . . . ṇ	য . . . y
উ . . . u	ঙ . . . ṅ	ত . . . t	র . . . r
ঊ . . . ū	চ . . . ch	থ . . . th	ল . . . l
ঋ . . . r̥	ছ . . . chh	দ . . . d	ব . . . v
ঌ . . . e	জ . . . j	ধ . . . dh	শ . . . ś
ঐ . . . ai	ঝ . . . jh	ন . . . n	ষ . . . ṣ
ও . . . o	ঞ . . . ñ	প . . . p	স . . . s
ঔ . . . au	ট . . . ṭ	ফ . . . ph	হ . . . h
			ক্ষ ks

ঐ ā	ঐ e
ঐ i	ঐ h
ঐ ī	ঐ m
ঐ u	ঐ ai
ঐ ū	ঐ o
ঐ r	ঐ au

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THREE STAGES OF THE SOUL

A. B. M. HABIBUR RAHMAN CHOWDHURY

It is an obvious fact that for the Ṣūfīs the ascension of the Prophet subsequently served as a guide-line for the progress of the soul towards the Majesty of the Most Magnanimous from the bonds of sensuality. Thus, Ibn 'Arabī expounds it in his two epoch-making works : *Kitāb al-Isrā' ilā Maqām al-Asrā* and *Futūhāt al-Makkīyyah*.¹

Apart from Ibn 'Arabī's three *Ma'ārij*, three stages of the soul, with which we shall deal here, it is clear that the Ṣūfīs ascribed a spiritual sense to interpretation of the Prophet's *Mi'rāj* and brought it nearer to the spiritual *mi'rāj* of the Ṣūfīs themselves. It seems that they have made their *mi'rāj* suitable by changing the Prophet's *Mi'rāj* to suit their own end in view. So it is not unusual that the Ṣūfīs use the same terms, following the same process in every detail of the *Mi'rāj*. But it is not

1. Cf. *E.I* (*Encyclopaedia of Islām*), art. *Mi'rāj*. In the *Futūhāt* (cf. Būlāq, 1293 A.H.) he devoted a whole chapter, No.367, to this subject of *Mi'rāj*, which contains a short mystical commentary on the *Mi'rāj* of the Prophet, a description of the spiritual Ascensions of the Ṣūfīs and saints, and a long *Mi'rāj*, where he, following the same route as the Prophet rose to the heavens and had long conversations on theological matters with the Prophets. As for *Kitāb al-Isrā'*. . . Cf. MS No (i) 1843/1292 in the Loth Cat, (ii) 3699, India Office Library, Berlin MS 2901/2, Brock GAL. (Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, vol I, Leiden, 1943) 574/15-6. Ismā'il ibn Sawdakīn, a well-versed student of Ibn 'Arabī, wrote a momentous *sharh* (*Kitāb al-Najāt*, Paris MS. No. 6613 Berlin MS. 2903 : India Office Library MS. No. 3699) on this work, and I completed the critical edition of both the treatises.

possible for the human soul to attain to God until it forgets its own attributes, freed from all bonds of phenomena.

In his another remarkable work, *Māhiyyat al-Qalb*,² Ibn 'Arabī describes three *ma'āriḥ*—three spiritual stages of the soul in a different way, citing many examples, Qur'ānic verses and Prophetic traditions to expound them in details and to make his ideas clear in the theme. But in spite of the close relationship among the three *ma'āriḥ*, he advocated the theory and its component parts throughout the chapters of this book, and partly in his *Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiyyah fī iṣlāḥ al-mamlakat al-insāniyyah*,³ and left the task of assembling them to the intelligent reader.

Before we proceed further, we propose to give below a short account of the heart in relation to these *ma'āriḥ*, as the heart represents the whole matter including several kinds of lights and other essential sources, and it forms the gate way to the spiritual progress and stages of the soul or, in other words, its *ma'āriḥ*.

The technical term "the heart" (*al-qalb*) is very much concerned with the theme of spiritual *mu'rāḥ*, the soul's spiritual progress, as it is the main centre and organ which provides the mystic with the true knowledge of God and divine mysteries.⁴ It is the "gnostic's eye—the organ by which God knows Himself, reveals Himself to Himself in the form of His epiphanies"⁵ (*tajalliyāt*). It is like a power house, and "its power is a secret force or energy (*quwwat khafiyah*)".⁶ There are many places inside and

2. Cf *Histoire* t. ('Uṭṭman Yahya, *Histoire et Classification de L'oeuvre-d' Ibn 'Arabī*, Damascus, 1964), I p. 297, Brock. S. (Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur* Supplement Band, Leiden, E J Brill, 1937), vol I, 798/97, MS. India Office Library No 658. This work was critically edited and translated, with a most valuable commentary, by R. W J. Austin in his thesis, "*Studies on the Māhiyyat al-Qalb*", University of London, 1965

3. Ed. H S. Nyberg, *Kleinere Schriften des Ibn al-'Arabī*, E J. Brill, Leiden, 1919, pp. 103-240

4. Cf *CISI* (Ralph Manheim, 'Creative Imagination' in the *Ṣūfism of Ibn 'Arabī* London, 1969), p. 221.

5. Cf *Ibid.*

6. Cf *Ibid.*, P. 222.

outside the heart, which have their own nature and meaning ; and the heart includes all of them ⁷ The validity and fruitfulness of all the actions and the religious practices depend only upon the intention of the heart. On the soundness of the heart depends the soundness of all other parts of the body, and even if it is corrupt or unsound then all other parts of the body become the same, as the Prophet said ⁸ Imām Tirmidhī is of the opinion that this heart is the source of the principles of knowledge (*usūl al-‘ilm*), and like the spring of water, and it is the origin of “light of faith (*nūr al-īmān*) and the light of submissiveness (*khushū‘*), piety (*taqwā*), love (*mahabbah*), consent (*ridā*), certainty (*yaqīn*), fear (*khawf*), hope (*rajā*) patience (*sabr*) and contentment (*qanā‘ah*)”.⁹ That is why Allāh speaks to His true servant in the heart, without any veil of hearing. A perfect gnostic gets in his heart at first faint light, then a line of light, then clear lights, and then visions ¹⁰ Sūfis maintain that the Prophet’s heart was cleansed at different times to devote the whole of his heart only to Allāh.¹¹ The word ‘*himmah*’ particularly signifies the power of the heart.¹² A gnostic, by the concentration of this “*himmah*” and with the help of active imagination, can change the states and circumstances in the outside world.¹³ As the different people possess different kind of hearts, Ibn ‘Arabī classifies them into three different groups : (a) the disciples of the science of the heart (*ashāb al-qulūb*), (b) the disciples of the rational intellect (*ashāb al-‘uqūl*) and (c) the simple believers (*mu‘minūn*).¹⁴

7. Cf. *Bayān al-Farq*, “*The Muslim World*”, 51, (1961), p. 28.

8. Cf. *Ibid*, p. 30.

9. Cf. *Ibid*

10. Cf. Al-Yāfi‘i, *Nashr al-Mahāsīn, al-Ghāliya*, Cairo, 1691, p. 118, *M. U.* (Al-Samarrā‘i, Qāsim, *Mas‘alah al-‘Urūj*, Baghdād, 1968, p. 211

11. Cf. Al-Qushairi, ‘Abd al-Karīm Ibn Hawāzin, *Kitāb al-Mi‘rāj*, India Office Library, Rotos, 29, fol. 51b, *M. U.*, p. 89.

12. Cf. *Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn ‘Arabī (CISI)*, p. 222.

13. Cf. *Ibid*, p. 223. Ibn ‘Arabī’s personal experience is a clear example to this fact, - he met and spoke to Ahmad al-Sabatī, a great saint and the son of a famous Caliph of Baghdād, in his corporeal body, who died many years ago. *CISI*, p. 53.

14. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 230.

According to Imām Tirmidhī the heart has four fairly coherent stations : “(a) the breast (*sadr*), (b) the heart proper (*qalb*), (c) the inner heart (*fu’ād*) and (d) the intellect (*lubb*)”.¹⁵ Among them every station possesses special significance. Thus the light of Islām (*nūr al-islām*) is the product of the breast, the light of the faith (*nūr al-imān*) is the product of the heart proper, the light of gnosis (*nūr al-ma’rifah*) is the product of the inner heart, and the light of unification (*nūr al-tawhīd*) is the product of the intellect, the inmost extent of the heart.¹⁶ However, all these four degrees of heart correspond to the four spiritual grades of the Ṣūfīs¹⁷

The successive spiritual stages of the heart help the traveller to conduct his meditation till he reaches the final degree of union. At the beginning of Ṣūfism the stages were very few, but by the passage of time and the gradual development of Ṣūfism they increased even to hundred in number, as al-Ansārī (d. 481 A. H.) points them out in *Manāzil al-Sā’irīn*.¹⁸ According to Imām al-Qushairī they are three, and at the final stage the traveller “loses his status in the vision of Reality”.¹⁹ In short, the heart, as a central part, is the stream of esoteric science (*‘ilm al-bāṭin*), and the most important organ, on which depends the whole function of the Ṣūfī *Mi’rāj*, with its various states and stations.

15. Cf. “*Bayān al-Farq . .*”, “*The Muslim World*”, 51 (1961), p. 25, According to Imām Tirmidhī, “the breast is so called because it is the first part (*sadr*) of the heart and its first station, just as the *sadr* of the day is its beginning or as the court is the first place in the homestead”, *Ibid.*, p. 29.

16. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-6.

17. Accordingly, the breast and the light of Islām within it correspond to the first rank, that of the Muslim, the light of faith in the heart corresponds to the believer (*mu’minūn*), the light of gnosis in the inner heart to the gnostic (*‘arif*), and the light of unification in the intellect to the highest rank, that of the unifier (*muwahhid*) *Ibid.*, p. 26.

18. Cf. Arberry, the Aryan Path, Vol. XXXII, July, 1961, p. 299, *Mas’alah al-‘Urūj* (M.U.), p. 126.

19. Cf. *Al-Risālah al-Qushairiyah*, Bulāk, 1286/1870, p. 44

As we have already indicated before, Ibn 'Arabī's ideas on the progress of the soul to the clear apprehension of its essential identity with the particular intelligence in the heart are widely spread in his remarkable work "*Māhiyyat al-Qalb*" He divided the process into three separate stages (*ma'āriḡ*). It is complete there but somewhat diffused. Accordingly, an arranged and abridged description of the dispersed *ma'āriḡ*, with relevant Qur'ānic verses, Prophetic traditions and examples, provided by him, is given below.²⁰

As regards the first *mī'rāj*, the stage of the connection between spiritual niceties and subtleties with the heart,²¹ it is the union (*ittiṣāl*) of the light of the vital soul (*nafs al-hywāniyyah*) with the heart. And this link is not attainable so long the traveller is engrossed in the material affairs.²² This is indicated in the Qur'ān. "Nay ! rather what they used to do has become like rust upon their hearts. Nay ! most surely they shall on that day be debarred from their Lord."²³...Nay, on the hearts are their locks".²⁴ It would be well if the Ṣūfīs would keep themselves within certain limits according to their essential necessity (*al-hājat al-ḡarūriyyah*), which is possible for them, but they exceeded the limits without any urgent need. So this excess is called the lock (*qūf*) here in the third verse of the Qur'ān ("... *aqfālūhā*"), with the indication (*al-ta'riḡ*) that the locks generally exist in the human nature. And due to their souls' propensities (*aghṛād*) and inclination towards the worldly acquisition devils enter into their hearts, and become partners in their wealth and children, and threaten them with poverty and ask them to be niggardly, as Allāh says, "The devil threatens you

20. But considering Dr. R. W. J. Austin's commendable work on this subject, with his philosophic disposition into a broad and fairly coherent system, which is the result of his own creative mind, and which cannot be improved further by the present writer, he likes to limit himself to the short textual description of them in his own way.

21. Cf. *Māhiyyat al-Qalb*, fol. 24a, "*Studies on the Māhiyyat al-Qalb*" (SMQ), pp. 6, 111.

22. Cf. *Māhiyyah*, fol. 28a SMQ. pp. 23-4, 126.

23. Al-Taṭfīf, LXXXIII, 14-15

24. Muhammad, XLVII, 24

with poverty and enjoins you to be niggardly . . . ;²⁵ and share with them wealth and children, and hold out promises to them ; and the devil makes not promises to them but deceive”²⁶ Then Allāh says, “Surely (as for) My servants, you have no authority over them”²⁷ It means that it will not be possible for the devil to enter into (to influence) the hearts of those people who will be satisfied only with their material needs. This way the realm of their Lord (spiritual world) becomes clear and visible to their perceptive eyes (*basir’ al-qalbiyyah*), as the Prophet says, “If the devils would not circle the hearts of mankind then they would see the angels of heavenly kingdom”.²⁸ This kind of diseases (devilish insinuations and rustings) return from the place which belongs, outside the heart, to animal soul (*nafs al-bahimiyyah*), which usually instructs in the interests of the body only. This is mentioned in the Qur’ān. “ . . . most surely (men’s) self is wont to command (him to do) evil, except such as my Lord has had mercy on . . . ”,²⁹ it is implied that through the fore-knowledge of God (*sābiqah azaliyyah*), according to which the end of everything happens, and to which all the causes are drawn out, even if a man possesses sins throughout the life he may die with *imān*, that is why, the Prophet says, “Don’t see in the activities of a man but rather see in his end”³⁰ (Notice whether he died with *imān* or without *imān*). This stage is called (by Ibn ‘Arabī) the first *Mi‘rāj*—the first spiritual stage of the soul³¹

As the soul is ignorant of this stage of *Mi‘rāj*, due to remoteness between it and the light of the intellect (*anwār al-‘aql*) and its nearness (relationship) to the darkness of the nature (*ẓulmat al-ṭab*), it is called “the soul that exhorts to evil” (*al-nafs al-ammārah bi al-sū’*)³²

In his attributes a complete man consists of three realms

25 Al-Baqarah, II 268.

26. Banī-Isrā’īl, XVII : 64.

27. Banī-Isrā’īl, XVII 65.

28. Cf *Māhiyyah*, fols 28a-28b, *SMQ*, pp 25-6, 126-7.

29. Yūsuf, XII 53

30 Bukhārī, Qadar, 5.

31. Cf. *Māhiyyah*, fols. 28-29a, *SMQ*., pp. 25-6, 127.

32. Cf. *Māhiyyah*. fol. 30a ; *SMQ*., p. 31, 132.

(*thalāthatu 'awālim*) (a) the realm of creation (*khalq*), (b) the realm of arrangement (levelling) or intermediate realm (*taswiyah*) and (c) the realm of command (*amr*)³³ When at last (after completion of three realms respectively) Allāh perfected the creation of man with the commanding breath (*nafk^hah amriyyah*), He declared, "Certainly We created man in the best make".³⁴ This complete shape of man is like the core of fruits (*lubb*) inside two shells (*qashrain*). The first shell is the designing shape and what is connected with this shape as the acquisitions, physical movement, the ambitions (*hummah*) of the heart, which is connected with the usefulness of the shapes and mundane desires. This is called the first veil (*al-hijāb al-awwal*). When a man overcomes it, he rejects it and he ascends to the first *mi'rāj*,—the first spiritual stage of the soul.³⁵

Imām Tirmidhī's similar expressions, about the breast (*sadr*) which represents the second station of the heart, corroborate this first *mi'rāj*, in its definition by the phrases: "*islām*" and *inshurāḥ al-sadr*".³⁶

This stage can be partially compared with Ḥaḍrat 'Ināyat Khān's³⁷ expression, the Sanskrit word, "*Ātma*" the soul of a man, including its three main stages: (a) the animal man, (b) the devil man and (c) the human man³⁸

As regards the second *Mi'rāj* (spiritual stage of the soul), it is the connection of the minor intelligence (*'aql al-juz'i*) with

33. Cf *Māhiyyah*, fols 46b-48b and *SMQ*, pp. 113-122, 193-199 for the details

34. Al-Tin, XCV 4.

35. Cf *Māhiyyah*, fols 48a-48b, *SMQ* 122, 199.

36. Cf *Māhiyyah*, fols. 27b, 37a, *SMQ*, pp. 21-2, 63, *Bayān al-Farq*, "*The Muslim World*", 51, (1961), pp 25, 32-7.

37. A great Sūfī Mystic who visited Western world in 1910 and stayed there till his death in 1926, teaching and delivering most valuable lectures on his own views, through which he developed his philosophy Cf "*The Sūfī Message of Ḥaḍrat Ināyat Khān*", London, 1960, vol. I, p 7.

38. Cf. *Ibid.*, London 1963, vol. VIII, part I, p. 28 (The different stages of the Spiritual Development).

the light of the soul that is attached to the heart, which passes through the devilish bar and the barriers of lusts (*shahwat*) in the soul, and it also goes through the innate propensities (*aghṛāḍ ṭabīʿīyyah*) until both the lights are united. The union of this intellectual light with heart takes place with the help of eye of discernment (*ʿam al-basīrah*) whose actions of special attribute (*khāṣṣīyah*) are related by the ill character, shaping in the heart, which cause the perceptible actions of the limbs ; certainly it is not due to the hidden thoughts (*Khatarāt al-bāṭinah*) that the soul gets power, and the character is enticing. As a result of this, a smoke rises upwards from the bottom of the heart and covers the mental vision completely and hinders the light of the partial intelligence from uniting with the heart ³⁹

This view of Ibn ʿArabī corresponds to the subtle expression of Imām Tirmidhī that the self is just like a hot smoke, being the origin of ill wishes, selfish desires and uncontrolled passions, which fill the breast and block up the light (of the heart within the breast) from illuminating.⁴⁰

The people who faced this situation are mentioned in the Qurʾān : “. . . Surely we have placed veils over their hearts lest they should understand it . . . They whose eyes were under a cover from my reminder. . . .”⁴¹ Without this veil a heart is called “intelligent” (*ʿāqil*) due to the illumination (*ishrāq*) of the light of intelligence in its arena ; as Allāh says, “Have they not travelled in the land so that they should have hearts with which to understand. . . .”⁴²

The implication is that this purity of heart can be attained by parting (*mufāraqah*) from the sensible world and by leaving soul's blameworthy character.⁴³ The Prophet also says, “the intelligence is a light in the heart which recognizes the right and wrong”⁴⁴

39. Cf *Māhīyyah*, fol “*The Muslim World*”, 51, (1961), 26.

40 Cf *Bayān al-Farq* . , “*The Muslim World*”, 51, (1961), 26

41. Al-Kashf, XXIII 57, 101.

42. Al-Hajj, XXII 46

43. Cf *Māhīyyah*, fol. 29a , pp. 26-27, 128-9.

44. Cf. *Ibid.*

When the mental vision is retarded from accepting the light of the intelligence and from its union with the heart, and the period of this condition lengthened, then it changes its position from the covers (*akinnah*) to blindness, and even it is called blindness. This is mentioned in the Qur'ān, "... for surely it is not the eyes that one blind, but blind are the hearts which are in the breasts.⁴⁵ And whoever is blind in this (world) shall (also) be blind in the hereafter, and more erring from the (right) way".⁴⁶ Here "spiritual blindness" is meant in the verse, which is generally accepted; and whoever dies with this quality, will be the same, with more, in the hereafter. In this way Ibn 'Abbās answered the bitter remark of one of his contemporaries (Ibn Jubair) pointing to his spiritual blindness⁴⁷

This is also indicated in some other verses of the Qur'ān. "And whoever turns away from My reminders, shall surely be a straitened life, and We will raise him on the day of resurrection, blind. He shall say: My Lord! why hast Thou raised me blind, and I was a seeing one indeed? He shall say Even so, Our communications came to you, but you neglected them; even thus shall you be forsaken this day"⁴⁸

The intellect, at the back of mental vision, was covered by the darkness of the nature and the propensities of the soul, so

45 Al-Hajj, XXII 46

46 Bani Isrā'il, XVII 72.

47 It is certain that this remark was made by Ibn Jubair against Ibn 'Abbās, who became blind in his old age, and who was at first the supporter of "*mut'a*", a temporary marriage which is contracted for a fixed period on rewarding the woman, but Ibn Jubair was deadly against this, Ibn 'Abbās, before his death, was also converted to Ibn Jubair's view. Once there was an exchange of hot words between them. Ibn 'Abbās insisted on the legality of "*mut'a*", and Ibn Jubair rejected the view, and threatened him saying, "If you commit this I will punish you by stoning (*rajm*)", and indicating the physical blindness of Ibn 'Abbās, said, "that is why Allāh made some people blind in this world". See the statement in E. 12, art *Mut'a*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*; *Kitāb al-Nikāh*, *bāb Nikāh al-Mut'a*, *Hadīth* No 11 and 22.

48. Tāhā, XX 124-6.

that the man abstained from the exertion in His way (*mujāhadah*) and from obeying His Messenger performing and practising what he brought, maintaining the existence of the intelligence in this realm of obligation (*taklif*) ; and he did not try well to remove the veils from his spiritual eyes, purifying his heart from the ill nature, before the disease defied all medical skill and the veils became the blindness and healing became impossible. If the man performs all these functions properly and correctly he will find the light of the intelligence as obviously as in the mirror of his heart, and he will behold the signs of his Lord and His management of affairs in this world. These are the things by which he can know his self well and ascend to the "*mi'rāj al-sa'ādah*" (the ascension of the bliss) through the Knowledge (*ma'rifah*) of his Lord. As Allāh says, "And be not like those who forsook Allāh, so He made them forsake their own souls .",⁴⁹ Obviously they forgot Allāh's signs turning towards other things, so that Allāh deprived them of the knowledge (*ma'rifah*) of their selves, which is the clear way⁵⁰ to know Him

In the second *mi'rāj* (spiritual stage) the soul is cognizant of its ascension from the lower stage of ignorance to the stage of proximity to intelligence due to its connection with the arena of the heart. At this stage the soul is exactly in the middle of the two stages of obedience and disobedience. For this reason, it is called "*Lawwāmāh*"⁵¹ (hanging in between the two stages). As the soul has at this stage necessary knowledge with irrefutable proof, disobedience of the soul will be more serious and more punishable than its disobedience at the stage of ignorance, though this is lower than the stage of uncovering of the spiritual eye and the illumination of the lights of the intelligence. This is indicated in the Qur'ān " . and Allāh has made him err having

49 Al-Hashr, LIX 19

50 It implies that "the man who knows that his soul (*nafs*) is the reality of the Real Being, knows his Lord" (through the knowledge of his self) (*man 'arafa nafsaḥū faqad 'arafa rabbahū*) Cf *CISI* ., P 207 for more details, also see the note of the text of "*Kitāb al-Isrā 'ilā al-Maqām al-Asrā*" , by Ibn 'Arabī MS No 1843/1292(11), India Office Library, fols , 85b-126b

51 Cf *Māḥṭṭyah*, fols 29a , *SMQ* , pp. 27-30, 129-131

knowledge and has set a seal upon his ear and his heart and put a covering upon his eye”⁵²

This second *mi'rāj*, (spiritual stage) is connected with the blaming soul (*al-naḥs al-lawwāmah*) and is the span of Ṣūfī path and the duration of the earnest endeavour and the spiritual exercise. At times the period is shortened by the desire and the connection of the delicate graces of God with the intrinsic movement of external limbs, and it can continue till the end of one's life. Its result is the guidance by the help of rational stream which appears through the uncovering of the eye of discernment, then happens the complete opening of the breast (*sadr*) to submission, which is the essence of the complete surrender to the authority of Allāh. At this stage a man does not move any of his external limbs, except it is purely for Allāh, and does not think of anything except truly for Allāh, and now he becomes externally and internally a complete true servant. Its result is to weaken the devil every way, as Allāh says, “Surely as regards My servants, you have no authority over them . . .⁵³ Then by Thy Might I will surely make them live an evil life, all, except Thy servants from among them, the purified ones”⁵⁴

There are also two groups of qualities in the second *mi'rāj*. The first group is a barrier, containing blameworthy qualities, which is related to the realm of soul. They are: haughtiness (*Kibr*), Vanity (*'ujb*), stinginess (*shuhh*), covetousness (*tama'*), hatred (*hiqd*), grudge (*hasad*), quarrel (*marā'*) wrath (*ghadab*), faithlessness (*khiyānah*), falsehood (*kidhb*), despondency (*qunūt*), ravenousness (*sharah*), calumny (*namimah*), defamation (*ghībah*), self-love (*hubb a-naḥs*), high hope (*tūl al-'amal*) and love or glorification (*hubb al-ta'zim*). The creatures adorn (*tazyīn al-khalq*) themselves regarding their own course of action and depend on it, anticipating the creation and being afraid of it, and all other such things which obstruct the soul from sincere devotion. For, all of this

52. Al-Jāthiya, XLV 23, Cf. *Māhiyyah*, fol 30a, *SMQ*, 31, 132

53. Al-Hijr, XV 42

54. Sād, XXIII 82-3, Cf. *Māhiyyah*, fols 30b-31a, *SMQ*, pp. 32-4, 134-135.

is a veil from Allāh. If a man avoids these bad qualities totally and, in exchange, accepts better qualities such as: modesty (*tawādū'*) truthfulness (*sidq*), nobleheartedness (*karam*), forbearance (*hilm*), belief in Allāh (*imān*), fulfilment of a promise or discharge of an obligation (*al-wafā'*), endurance (*sabr*), forgiveness (*ṣafh*), diffidence (*ḥavā'*), poverty (*faqr*), satisfaction (*qanā'ah*), good will and approval (*riḍā'*), provity (*'iffah*), godliness (*taqwā*), faithfulness or reliability (*amānah*), safeguarding (*siyānah*), piousness (*wara'*), trust in Allāh (*tawakkul*), conviction of Allāh (*yaqīn*), loving (*tawaddud*), pardon (*'afw*), respect and preference for others (*ithār*), backing (*'ānah*), kindness (*rahmah*), bravery (*shajā'ah*), earnest endeavour (*mujāhadah*), sagacity (*ḥikmah*), frankness (*ikhhlās*), perception (*ma'rīfah*) and worship (*'ubūdiyyah*) When the soul acquires these commendable qualities leaving blameworthy qualities, then heart ascends to the second *mi'rāj* and the second stage of felicity. The first group of the qualities is called "*fanā' 'an 'ālam al-suwar*" (non-existence from the realm of forms), and the second is "*fanā' 'an 'ālam al-ma'āni*" (non-existence from the realm of thought)⁵⁵

This second *mi'rāj* corresponds to Ḥaḍrat 'Ināyat Khān's terminology of Sanskrit world "*Mahatma*"—a high soul, an illuminated being, a spiritual personality, including its all three stages⁵⁶

As regards the third *mi'rāj*, the third spiritual stage of the soul, it is the last stage of the journey and the grand felicity⁵⁷. It is the loyal attachment (*ikhhlās*) and the maximum uncovering (*al-kashf al-aqsā*), which is regarded as the utmost enterprise of the *Ṣūfī* (*iqdām al-sāhkin*).⁵⁸ When the departure of the virtuous soul from the realm of nature takes place, after its separation from realm of form, and once separated from the lower stage of brutishness to reach the range of the angels, till it lives in the arena of the heart, it establishes there connection with the stream of the

55 Cf *Māhīyyah*, fols. 48b-49a, *SMQ*, pp. 122-4, 199-201

56 Cf "The *Ṣūfī Message*" of Ḥaḍrat 'Ināyat Khān," Vol VIII, pp. 29-30, for the details

57 Cf *Māhīyyah*, fol. 32b, *SMQ*, pp. 40, 139.

58 Cf *Māhīyyah*, fol. 24a, *SMQ*, pp. 10, 114.

intelligence by the eye of discernment till they become united. At this stage the soul becomes peaceful, the heart becomes open and delighted, and the eye of certainty becomes unveiled, and divine secrets become perfectly clear to the soul, and the unknown better spiritual essences become available.⁵⁹

Now every unseen things become vivid, the faith is confirmed, real union becomes evident, and the uncertainty is gone and the certainty exists. This is indicated in the Qur'ān: "And thus did We show Abraham the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that he might be of those who are sure",⁶⁰ and this is the third *mu'rāj* above which there is no degree or goal for the *Ṣūfīs*.⁶¹ This is called "*fanā* 'an al-*fanā*" (non-existence from the non-existence), and this is the stage of independence, where the heart, qualified with the praiseworthy qualities, becomes partner with the angels in the particular servitude (*'ubūdiyyah*), and gains divine gifts (graces), with which it becomes completely occupied. Then the spiritual traveller travels deep into the realm of heart and becomes absorbed with it so much so that if he talks, he talks to it, and if he walks he walks to it, and if he points out something, he points it out to it. Thus the transcendental world, becomes conspicuous to him and he enters into the spiritual world, being absolutely separated from the perceptive world, and then he comes into contact with the permanent realities, as it was in the case of Ibrāhīm, when he was asked to offer up his son, due to the influence of the son in his heart. So, when he submitted himself completely to Allāh's will, and became ready to carry out His instruction into effect, and Allāh

59. Cf *Māhyyah*, fol. 34b, *SMQ.*, pp 50-51, 146-147,

60. Cf. *Ibid*, Al-An'ām, VI 76. This showing the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth means that Ibrāhīm received from Allāh the insight into Divine Laws of nature functioning in the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. This insight convinced Ibrāhīm that Allāh is the real controller of the Universe and His power is the Supreme above all. Cf M M 'Alī The Holy Qur'ān, Woking, 1917, p 303.

61. Cf *Māhyyah*, fol. 34b, *SMO*, pp 50-51, 146-7

found his heart free from the influence of his son, He exempted him from the calamity.⁶²

This third *mi'rāj* (the spiritual stage of soul) is related to Ḥaḍrat 'Ināyat Khān's third terminology, "*Paramatma*", the divine man, the person having self-realisation, the God-conscious soul ; that is "the highest stage of the awakening of the conscious".⁶³

62 Cf *Māhiyyah*, fol 49a , *SMQ* , pp. 124-6, 201-2

63 Cf. "*The Sūfī Message of Ḥaḍrat 'Ināyat Khān*", vol VIII, p. 31.

CONJUGAL PRIVILEGES OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND THEIR IMPACT ON ISLAMIC MARRIAGE LAWS

MUHAMMAD REZA-UR-RAHIM

A verse in the *Holy Qur'ān*, viz, *Al-Ahzāb*, 50, grants some conjugal privileges to Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) the significance of which has so long remained unnoticed. They have a profound impact on Islamic marriage laws. The present article is an attempt to bring to light this important matter.

The verse referred to above is as under: ¹

“(Part-A) O Prophet ! Lo ! We have made lawful unto thee (a) thy wives unto whom thou hast paid their dowries and (b) whom thy right hand possesseth of those whom God hath given thee as *peaceful acquisitions* (from the non-Muslims) and the (c) daughters of thine uncle on the father's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the father's side, and the daughters of thine

1 The verse in the original is as under :-

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ الَّتِي آتَيْتَ أَجُورَهُنَّ
وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَاتِ
خَالَكَ وَبَنَاتِ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتِ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّرَأَةً مَوْلَانِهَا وَهَبْتَ
لِنَفْسِكَ أَنْ تَزْنِيَ أَنْ يَشْفَعَكَ اللَّهُ لَكَ مَنْ دُونِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِي أَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ
لِكَيْلَا يَكُونَ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

uncle on the mother's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the mother's side who emigrated with thee, and (d) a believing woman if she give herself unto the Prophet and the Prophet desire to ask her in marriage, (Part-B)—(e) *privileges* for thee only, and not for the rest of believers (f) We are aware of that which we enjoined upon them concerning their wives and those whom their right hands possess—(g) that thou mayst be free from blame, (h) for Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful”

(Translation adapted (in italics) from M M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān*, Chap, The Clans, V. 50).

In the above verse women of four categories have, as a special measure, been made lawful for Prophet Muhammad for the conjugal purpose.

These are the following

(a) all of his wives (though they are in excess of the number allowed for general Muslims)

(b) the slave girl whom he acquired peacefully and not through war,

(c) his cousins who emigrated with him to Madina,

(d) any Muslim woman who submits herself to him (without the knowledge of her guardian) while he intends to marry her

These are privileges for the Prophet, general Muslims are debarred from these things. From this it follows that the general Muslims are to abide by the following rules in their marriages :

(a) wives unlimited in number are unlawful, (*Al-Nisā*, 3 limits this number to four and allows it only for maintenance of orphans and lays down the condition of equal treatment of the wives) (See Appendix),

(b) non-Muslim women acquired peacefully, i.e. who are not spoils of war, cannot be used as concubines,

(c) cousins are not lawful for marriage,

(d) marriage of a Muslim woman arranged between the bride and the bridegroom themselves (without the consent of the bride's guardians) is not lawful

Of these the first only is universally recognised in Islām. The second and the third have so long remained completely

unknown. The fourth is recognised by various, though not all, schools of Islāmic law. This verse actually supplies a Qur'ānic basis for their opinion

In the translation of the verse, above, "Part-A" is devoted to the statement of the privileges and "Part-B" to clarifications as regards the privileges. Let us now discuss in details the significances of the four clauses in "Part-B."

Analysis of Part-B of verse, *Al-Ahzāb*, 50

A. Clause (e) states that all the four items in "Part-A," i. e. clauses (a), (b), (c) and (d) are exclusive privileges for the Prophet which obviously implies that these are not lawful for the general Muslims. The word "خالصة" (specially), in clause (e) in the original text¹ refers to all the four items in part A. This is also the view of the great exegisist of the *Holy Qur'ān*, al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538 A H / 1144 A D.) expressed in his *Al-Kashshaf*.² It is obvious from the verse itself. Nevertheless according to the prevalent view clause (d) only is acknowledged as an exclusive privilege. This argument, lame as it is, cannot, however, disprove the contention made above about the purpose of clause (e). The meaning of "Part-A" is self-evident.

الكشاف عن حقائق غوامض التنزيل وعبون الاقاويل 2
في وجوه التاويل للامام الزمخشري المتوفى سنة ٥٣٨ اله جزء
الثالث ص ٥٥ بيروت -

Commenting on the word "خالصة" (specially) al-Zamakhsharī writes -

والدليل على انها وردت في اثر الاحلايات الاربع
مخصوصة، رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على سبيل التوكيد لها
قوله (وقد علمنا ما فرضنا عليهم في أزواجهم وما ملكت أيمانهم)
بعد قوله (من دون المؤمنين) وهي جملة اعتراضية -

Translation :

"That it (i. e. the word خالصة) is mentioned about the four categories of privileges specified for the Prophet of God, may God bless him and grant him peace by way of an emphasis is proved by the parenthetical sentence (of the *Qur'ān*) "We are aware of that which we enjoined upon them concerning their wives and those whom their right hands possess" after the expression (of the *Qur'ān*) . "not for the rest of the believers."

In the prevalent view connotation of clause (a) is correctly understood, but the connotations of clauses (b), (c) and (d) are not so. The correct interpretation will be manifest from the elucidation of clause (f) which follows.

B Clause (f) refers to the verses of the *Holy Qur'ān* to which these privileges are exceptions. Obviously, these verses were revealed previous to *al-Ahzāb*, 50. These are as under : (for the text of the verses see Appendix).

(1) *Al-Nisā*, 3. In this verse, as stated above, the number of wives for Muslims has been limited to four and this allowance is granted only for maintenance of the orphans. The Prophet is excluded from this limitation by clause (a).

Again, in this verse permission has been accorded to the Muslims as regards the lawfulness of woman coming under the category described as "what your right hands possess" (ما ملكت (أيما لكم). In Islāmic terminology this means 'any thing acquired from the non-Muslims'. So long it was held that this necessarily means 'spoils of war' (الغنيمة).³ But clause (b) provides us with a clue to a clearer conception in this matter. It indicates that any peaceful acquisition from non-Muslims known as *fay'* (الفئى) is also included in what is stated as "what your right hands possess". Clause (b) legalises the Prophet's taking the Egyptian slave girl (Māria) as "what your right hands possess". She belonged to the class of acquisitions known as

3. The commentators of the *Holy Qur'ān* have translated the expression مما افاة الله عليك in V. 33 50 as "of those whom God has given thee as spoils or war". But this is not correct. The correct translation is as stated in the article "of those whom God has given thee as peaceful acquisitions (from the non-Muslims)". The mistake is due to a confusion between the meanings of the terms الغنيمة and الفئى.

About the connotation of the word الغنيمة and its difference with الفئى Ibn Manzūr, the author of *Lisān al-'Arab*, (Beirut, 1955) says in vol. XII, rt. غنم, on the authority of al-Azhari (A. H. 282-370), the author of *Tahzib al-Lugha*

قال الازهرى . الغنيمة ما اوجف عليه المسلمون بحياتهم وركابهم من اموال المشركين واما الفئى فهو ما افاة الله من اموال المشركين بلا حرب ولا ايجاف عليه .

Fay'. Such non-Muslim women are being prohibited by this clause for the general Muslims. General Muslims can marry non-Muslim women belonging to the class of *fay'* only when they embrace Islām. This is borne out by the verse *Al-Nisā* 25 (see Appendix) in which permission is given to marry "believing maids whom your right hands possess", and also by the verse *Al-Mumtahanah*, 10 (see Appendix) where it is stated that a woman from a non-Muslim society taking refuge with the Muslim is not to be returned to them. Such a woman can be married by the Muslims if she embrace Islām. And the Muslims should pay to the non-Muslims any dues they may have against her.

To possess a slave girl and to have sexual relation with her were not immoral acts according to ancient standards. Following this the Prophet had accepted the Coptic slave girl presented to him by the then Christian ruler of Egypt. The *Holy Qur'ān* seeks to raise the standard of morality by prohibiting acquisition of slave girls for the Muslims except in the case of war captives. Even in the cases of slave girls thus allowed the *Holy Qur'ān* enjoins "Force not your slave girls to whoredom that ye may seek enjoyment of the life of the world, if they would preserve their chastity" (24 . 33).

(2) *Al-Nisā*, 23. By this verse 'sisters', among other relations, have been made unlawful for marriage. The next verse *al-Nisā*, 24 by stating that "lawful unto you are all beyond those mentioned" legalises cousins for marriage. Now, clause (c) of *al-Ahzāb*. 50 by stating that the Prophet only is allowed to marry his cousins (even not all of them but only those who emigrated with him to Madīna) abrogates the above mentioned expression in *al-Nisā* 24 viz, "lawful unto you are all beyond those mentioned".

That the verse *al-Ahzāb*, 50 has a force of overriding all that were revealed before it and contradicts it is indicated by the clause (f), viz, "We are aware of that which We enjoined upon

Translation Al-Azharī said *Ghanimah* is that part of the properties of the non-Muslims (lit polytheists) for which the Muslims led their horses and camels And *Fay'* is what Allāh made available from the properties of the non-Muslims (lit. polytheists) without war or any exertion for that.

them concerning their wives and those whom their right hands possess", i.e. it states that in spite of the earlier revelations which come in contradiction with it the commandments contained in *al-Ahzāb*, 50 are to prevail

This is a case of abrogation. The *Holy Qur'ān* states :

"Such of our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten We bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allāh is able to do all things" ? (*The Cow*, 106).

The Prophet has also said in a *Hadith* quoted in the article (p 23) that some words of God can cancel others

Commentators have tried to explain clause (c) as meaning either of the following connotations :

- (a) it intends to prohibit the Prophet from marrying those of his cousins only who did not emigrate with him to Madīna
- (b) it intends to exclude others from the right of marrying the cousins of the Prophet who emigrated with him to Madīna

But the alternative interpretations are not tenable. "Part—A" clearly shows that clause (c) is one of the four clauses that treat of women lawful for the Prophet exclusively. Clause (c) cannot be taken out of the class to which the other three clauses viz, (a), (b) and (d) belong and given a twisted interpretation. Its position is the same as that of the other three of the clauses. This means that cousins (mentioned in clause 'c') are not lawful for general Muslims in the same way as those women stated in clauses (a), (b) and (d). Clause (c) refers to the Prophet's marriage with Zainab b Jahsh, his cousin

This discovery deals a blow to the practice of marriage within blood relation prevalent in Islām and recognised by the *Shari'ah* (the Islāmic common law) In order to remove the discrepancy between the *Shari'ah* and the *Holy Qur'ān*, the *Shari'ah* needs be amended.

(3) *Al-Nisā*, 24 In this verse has been stated what implies that in a marriage the bride is to be sought through proper channel. In other words, it should not be a marriage arranged between the bride and the bridegroom themselves.

Clause (d) places the Prophet above the limitation.

According to the prevalent view this part of the verse means

that any woman who agrees to marry the Prophet without any dōwry, is lawful for him, dowry being an indispensable part of a marriage in Islām. But the hollowness of this argument is manifest from the clause (a) which mentions dowry as necessary in the case of marriage of the Prophet also. The true sense of this part of the verse rather is that a woman who offers herself to the bridegroom directly instead of being offered by her guardians was lawful for marriage for the Prophet only and nobody else. So this part of the verse ordains that a marriage without the consent of the bride's guardians is not valid. The *Shari'ah* should be amended accordingly.

C Clause (g) explains the reason for granting these privileges to the Prophet. The reason is stated to be to protect the Prophet from incurring any blame for his being associated with things unlawful. It should be borne in mind that the *Holy Qur'ān* has no intention of granting to the Prophet a license for using unlawful things prohibited by divine law. The Prophet himself said that God enjoined upon the Prophets what He enjoined upon the Muslims⁴. So the Prophet is also under the general laws of Islām. Granting of special privileges to the Prophet became necessary to save him from blame for having made marriages which though formerly lawful, were made unlawful by *al-Ahzāb-50*.

D Clause (h) states that these privileges are granted to the Prophet by God as a gesture of His forgiveness and mercy to His Prophet.

Some problems and their solutions

Now, after it is established that marriages have taken place in Islām which cannot be treated as authorised by the *Holy Qur'ān* we are faced with the problem of the validity or, otherwise, of such marriages performed in the past and also of the right of inheritance for issues of such marriages. But these problems are not at all difficult of solution. Here we get the solution from the Prophet who declared that actions are to be judged according to the merit of the motives behind. ("انما الاعمال بالنيات") When such marriages were performed it was done with the purest of beliefs that these were legal and valid.

ان الله امر المؤمنين بما امر به المرسلين - مشکوة المصابيح 4.
كتاب البيوع -

So these are to be accepted as such. The right of inheritance for the offsprings of such marriages was also not affected in any way:

There remains yet another problem to be solved. And this is the decision to be taken about the fate of marriages of this nature existing at present. In this case, we have to listen to the verdict of our conscience for its solution. And obviously, it will be that such marriages as were based wrongly on blood relationship cannot be allowed to continue and must be treated as null and void. The *Holy Qur'ān* came to purify the lives of its followers. So if they want to follow the *Holy Qur'ān* they cannot accept any condition in their life which is prohibited by it. When the verse prohibiting more than four wives to Muslims was revealed the companions of the Prophet all divorced their wives in excess of the number allowed. But the marriages which were based on procedural mistakes like that of a Muslim woman without the consent of her guardians need not be dissolved if the basic cause of invalidity of the marriages be removed by procuring the necessary consents.

Finally remains to be solved the problem of maintenance of wives thus divorced. The *Holy Qur'ān* has ordained that the divorced women must be looked after properly (2.241). So it would be the duty of the erstwhile husbands to provide for the maintenance of such divorced wives and their children. The divorced wives may be married to others if they so desire. But if they choose to remain with their children it must be provided for.

Rigidity of the Shari'ah and the Solution

In reconstructing the Islāmic marriage laws in the light of the present discovery the greatest stumbling block may be encountered from the age-long concept of the immutability of the Shari'ah. This is because it is held that the Shari'ah is based on the *Holy Qur'ān* which contains the immutable words of God. But a critical examination of the Shari'ah, as it is prevailing now will show that it is not always based on the *Holy Qur'ān*. The present discussion based on the verse, *Al-Ahzāb*, 50 of the *Holy Qur'ān* clearly proves it. So we may state that there exists discrepancy between the *Holy Qur'ān* and some parts of the Shari'ah as it is prevailing. And such parts of the Shari'ah as do not agree with the *Holy Qur'ān* must as already stated be

amended. The *Holy Qur'ān* being the basis of Islām must prevail in the Islāmic law. And in this process it is not the immutability of the *Holy Qur'ān* rather it is the so-called immutability of the framers of the *Shari'ah* that is affected. It is no reflection on the early savants of Islām. They were sincere Muslims. They tried to understand the *Holy Qur'ān* to the best of their ability And what they understood to be the meaning of the sacred book they followed sincerely in their lives. Nothing more is possible and nothing more is expected from a man. To err is human It is the motive behind an action that will determine the merit or demerit of an action The Prophet said that "he who tries to solve a problem and arrives at a wrong conclusion earns one merit and he who arrives at the correct conclusion earns two merits". About the authority of the *Holy Qur'ān* the Prophet said "My words cannot cancel the words of God and the words of God can cancel my words. And some words of God can cancel others"⁵ The Prophet has thus placed the authority of the *Holy Qur'ān* above that of his own. And the Muslims have only to follow him for finding a solution of the problems raised by the present discovery.

APPENDIX

(Reproduced from M. M. Pickthall's *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān*.

1. *Al-Nisā* 3. And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four, and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the women) that your right hands possess. Thus, it is more likely that ye will not do injustice (Adapted in italics).

2 *Al-Nisā*. 23 Forbidden unto you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your father's sisters, and your mother's sisters, and your brother's daughters, and your foster-mothers, and your foster-sisters, and your mothers-in-law and your step-daughters who are under your protection (born) of your women

5. عن جابر بن عبد الله قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "كل ما لا ينسخ كلام الله وكلام الله لا ينسخ كلامي وكلام الله ينسخ بعضه بعضا" (إدار وطني)

unto whom ye have gone in-but if ye have not gone in unto them, then it is no sin for you (to marry their daughters) and the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins. And (it is forbidden unto you) that ye should have two sisters together, except what hath already happened (of that nature) in the past. Lo ! Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

3. *Al-Nisā*, 24. And all married women (are forbidden unto you) save those (*women*) whom your right hands possess It is a decree of Allāh for you Lawful unto you are all beyond those mentioned, so that ye seek them with your wealth in honest wedlock, not debauchery. And those of whom ye seek content (by marrying them), give unto them their portions as a duty. And there is no sin for you in what ye do by mutual agreement after the duty (hath been done) Lo ! Allāh is ever Knower, Wise. (Adapted in italics)

4 *Al-Nisā*, 25. And whoso is not able to afford to marry free, believing women, let them marry from the believing maids whom your right hands possess. Allāh knoweth best (concerning) your faith. Ye (proceed) one from another, so wed them by permission of their folk, and give unto them their portions in kindness, they being honest not debauched nor of loose conduct And if when they are honourably married they commit lewdness they shall incur the half of the punishment (prescribed) for free women (in that case). This is for him among you who feareth to commit sin But to have patience would be better for you, Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

5 *Al-Mumtahanah*. 10.—O ye who believe, When believing women come unto you as fugitives, examine them Allāh is Best Aware of their faith Then, if ye know them for true believers, send them not back unto the disbelievers. They are not lawful for them (the disbelievers), nor are they (the disbelievers) lawful for them And give them (the disbelievers) that which they have spent (upon them). And it is no sin for you to marry such women when ye have given them their dues. And hold not to the ties of disbelieving women, and ask for (the return of) that which ye have spent, and let them (the disbelievers) ask for that which they have spent. That is the judgement of Allāh. He judgeth between you. Allāh is Knower, Wise.

ON THE CONJUNCT 'JÑĀ' AND ITS DERIVATIVES

HARENDRA CHANDRA PAUL

By the Skt "jñā" we generally mean, 'one who knows (things spiritual or thinks on matters related to 'Spirit')', and accordingly, he is often called an *ātma-jñā*, i. e., knower of the Spirit or Self. In that sense it may well be cognate with Greek *gnō* forming words like *gnostic* (or a mystic, i. e., one having esoteric spiritual knowledge), *gnosis* (or knowledge of spiritual mysteries), *gnome* (or maxim, aphorism), or intelligence and *genie* (of. Skt *jñā-in*, or rather *gun-in*); all of which are surely connected with Arabic words *jinnu* (or 'demons', commonly used in Bengali, *jīn*) with plural sense and *jannatu*, meaning garden or paradise. To be an inhabitant of this heavenly Garden (or *Jannat*) one must be mad (after spiritual knowledge, cf. the Ar. verb *janna*, to be mad, and also the heroic personage in Islamic literature *Majnūn* who is ordinarily said to be mad, but was really a seeker after pure Love or spiritual knowledge).

From this *jñā* is ordinarily formed the common verbal root *jñā*, meaning 'to know', and it appears to be cognate with our Bengali *jānā* 'to know', as we find in *jñāta*, (or what is already) known. But *jānā* is really a *viḍdhi* word of *janā*, feminine of *jana* or *jan*, made articulate with an 'a' inserted between *jñ* (or *j* and *n*). And from this *jana* is derived the word *Janaka*, commonly meaning 'father' or a 'begetter', but really it signifies one who is an epitome of all spiritual knowledge, as we find in the character of *Janaka*, the father of *Sītā*, the wife of *Rāma*. In the same way, *Janā* is found to be the wife of *Arjuna*, the progenitor of *Pra-vira*, literally a seeker proceeding to be a hero (of perfect knowledge).

Again, *sarvajñā*, one who knows every thing, is pronounced as *savvaja*, but *yajñā*, 'Sacrifice' and *viññāna*, the 'Science' (of knowledge) as *jaṇṇo* (and *vinnanam* and our Bengali *vinnān* or

vinān to explain scrutinizingly, cf. also Persian *bīnad*, 'he sees' from *didan*, to see), or *ājñā*, 'command' as *ānā*, in different *Prākṛta* languages as Vararuci exemplifies.

In our modern Aryan languages also the same conjunct is found to be pronounced differently by the different provincial languages. In Bengali or Oriya *jñā* is pronounced *gga* though in writing they retain the same spelling. In Hindi and Panjabi it is both written and pronounced *gya*. In Gujarati and Marathi, though the conjunct is written *gya*, but they pronounce respectively *dna* and *dnya*. Again, in Sindhi the conjunct is assimilated to a single letter which is something like *gha* as in Arabic letter *gh* (*ghain* or *ghyn*). John Beames has given so many illustrations to this effect in his *A comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages of India* (vol I, pp 302—4).

From this instability of the conjunct, both in spelling and pronunciation, and also in their differences of meaning, though the words formed of it are of the same stock, we may conjecture with confidence that the conjunct was surely in its origin a combination of two guttural sounds, one *g* (or rather *gh*) and the other *ñ*, whose use in the different languages of India is always discarded, and in the other so-called 'foreign' languages it is not even available for which the letter *n* is used instead. Now let us see how this conjunct is used in its different derivatives, and what they really signify.

The verbal noun *jñāna* from the stem *jñā* is really meaning "knowing" or "know-ledge", an instrument (of procedure) that has led one to be a *jñā*. It is something like a *lej* (cf. L. *lynx*, Gk. *lux*, or a 'tail') of lyncean arrogance that has developed in course of searching after spiritual knowledge and that ('ledge') is to be tagged off before going to be *jñā*. *Jñāna* as a verb is connected with Hindi *jānnā*, 'to know' or Beng. *jān* or *jānan*, and in Gipsy *janava*, Kashmiri *zānun*. The Beng. *jānā*, commonly meant 'to know', is really meaning 'cause to know'. Again, in Persian *jānā*, derived from *jān* or life, is only an address of welcome of one's Beloved, who is dearer to his own life even. The word *jānān* also refers to one's dearest one, though ordinarily it is taken as a plural of *jān*. Besides being a plural affix, *ān* has also other different meaning as a suffix in Persian. It forms

ismī-hālyā or noun of condition, and thereby by loving or living with (cf. Beng. *bhāla vāsa*, meaning both 'love' and 'good residence') his *jānān*, the self is automatically conditioning himself to have the spiritual knowledge which is really the inmost essence of one's life to be united with another soul, signified in the meaning of *ān* as a suffix of place (or the real placement of the Self). In this latter sense the Arabic word *jan-āt*, pl of *jinnatu*, meaning the Paradise, has probably also influenced the Persian word *jān*. Again, consider the Arabic word *janānu*, meaning 'mind, heart' from the root combined of the letters *jīm* and *nūn* (i. e., a combination of the conjunct *jñ*) whose plural is *ajnānu* ; and it may well be compared with *ajñāna*, 'ignorance', or Beng. *ajñā*, 'unknown'. 'Ignorance' is here really no 'want of knowledge, but ignoring all ordinary senses of common knowledge (as applied to human beings)

The word used in Persian for 'to know' is *dānistan* (and in Singhalese *dannavā*) and from it is formed its *ismī-fā'ili dānā*, meaning 'one who knows' This *dānā* may well be cognate with *jānā*, as in meaning, so also in vocalisation, as we have already seen that 'd' is often interchanged with 'j'. Compare also Skt. *adya* and Beng. *āji*, 'to-day', Skt. *madya* and Pali *majjā*, 'wine' ; and Beng. *ujān*, going upwards, from Skt. *udyāna* (from *ut-yāna*), 'Garden'. Besides, *dā-nā* and Skt. *dā-tā*, one who bestows (or sacrifices) for the sake of others (who are really no less than his own selves), are from the same root *dan*, from which is derived *danu*, the progenitor of the *dānavas*, the so-called "Demons". Now it is well-known to us that the more one sacrifices, the more one begets spiritual knowledge. And we find that as the Per. *dān* has the sense of knowing, so also the meaning of 'possession' : as *zabān-dān*, a linguist, but *numak-dān*, or *shama'dān*, means 'the case possessing the salt (of life) or the candle (of knowledge), usually translated respectively the 'salt-cellar' or 'candle-stick' (the candle of which waxes as the light of spiritual knowledge is firing it).

The Skt. root *da* is said to be from *dadāti*, i. e., he bestows (having the desiderative sense of knowing). Compare also Per. *dānad*, he knows, but *dihad*, he gives, from *dādan*, to give ; Per. *dād* also means 'justice', i. e., justice done by bestowing, and the Skt. *dāna*, a charitable action. *Didan*, to see, as already observed,

also appears to be from the same root, and really one who sees or knows (or bestows with a spiritual outlook), can only explain (cf Beng. *vināna*) clearly the mystery of life. And John Beames remarks on this Skt root: "This is one of the primitive Indo-European race-words, and being such we probably have not got it in its original form in Sanskrit. With the idea of giving is intimately connected that of dividing, or apportioning, and we find in Sanskrit several roots with this meaning, all of which seem to point back to some earlier common root which has been lost" (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 43).

As the palatal 'j' is often changed to dental 'd', so also there may be interchange of letters between the palatals and the gutturals, as we find in *jan* and *gan*, both meaning in Beng. 'the inner essence of a man', as revealed in the words *janaśakti* and *ganaśakti*, meaning thereby 'the spiritual power that strengthens the capacity of every individual (whether a male or female)'. Again in Persian *jan* (or rather *zan*) is an woman, or a wife, and *zanāna*, though in Persian means 'womanly' (or seraglio), in Bengali it has come to the meaning of an woman in general, or the wife in particular. In the same way *gana* (or even *jana*) connected with English *genus*, Perso-Ar. *jins* (or *jinsu*), from which is derived our Beng *jinis*, (the essence of) a thing, may also mean a multitude of persons, and thus its feminine is said to be *ganikā*, a prostitute. But in this feminine sense it is more likely to be connected with *ganaka*, meaning 'a counter' (or an occultist) who accounts for the mysteries of the secret of a life, and in this sense *ganikā*, meaning a 'courtesan' or -zan, is more preferred.

All these derivatives, as discussed above, are in one way or other, connected with *jñā* or its *vrddhi jñā*, by which every *jñā* is in pleasure to extend his 'knowledge' to others. A *jñā* is a knower of that secret or spiritual knowledge which is really inherent in every being (or thing), but without proper cultivation of many so-called 're-births' of the evolutionary developments till its stage of the highest faculty of a man, as symbolized in the letter *ñ* or *n*, he cannot rise to its perfection from all imperfection, that is really a conjunct from its lowest level of inanimate beings to its highest stage of manhood, which also must be

extinguished or rather surpassed to become a 'jñ-a'. As from *jñā* is formed the word *jñā-ta*, but in like manner there can not be any word *jñā-ta*. For the knowledge of a *jñā* is such a State that has no past or even future, and it is ever present. *Jñāta*, though ordinarily means 'known', but it has really a causal sense, meaning thereby 'made known'. By knowing or being made to know, one may become a past tense (or action) of its procedure of development, or perfect or rather made perfected of its awareness or consciousness. *Jñāna* (or *jñā-ana*) will thus naturally mean a know-ing stage of a man which is ever in process in every soul

From *jñā* is, again, derived the word *jñā-ti*, meaning 'kinsfolk' or simply 'kin'. If *-ti* is taken as an affix of the present tense, *jñā-ti* will be equivalent to *jānā-ti*, he knows, or rather as the self is in the reflexive mood of his own consciousness, he thereby causes others to know of this characteristic. In Persian also we find *dānād*, he knows, from *dānistan* 'to 'know'. And if it be an affix of the abstract noun, as *samskr̥ti* or culture from *samskār*, it would mean the quality of the knowledge that is being exhibited in persons of same nature. But it is now generally interpreted as members of the class or nation who are originally of same blood. In this sense also it is really referring to the original idea of 'knowledge' that is inherent in every being. For the word *rakta*, for 'blood', may be taken as a past participle from *ra-ga* (in Persian *rag*, a vein), whose *vrddhu* word is surely *rāga*, commonly used for 'anger', but really meaning the pleasure of the inner self that is ever proceeding on, whether the movement be slow or turbulent; and I think this slow or soothing movement is really meant for *anurāga*, meaning love, affection on attachment, and the turbulent or anaesthetic movement was originally compared to the *rāg* or *vi-rāg* as used in Bengali. And this *rāga* is again meaning the various modulations of tune in a song, as we find in the phrase *rāg-rāginī*. As *rāginī* is taken as a feminine of *rāg* (or *rāga*), so also *rājñī* (or Old Hindi *rāginī*) is the fem. of *rājā* (or *rājan vrddhu* of *raja*), which was most probably originally *rā-jñā*, the knower (of the 'Fire' or 'Ra', the mystic symbol for 'fire' in the religion of the original Semitics) or the know-ing person who has become aware of the inner pleasure that is inherent in every being, and with the experience of this knowledge he is also causing others to be decorated (cf. Beng *rāngāna*, *rañge rāngā*) by this acquired knowledge. The Skt. root *rañj*, made

basically connected with *rājan*, is probably only for the reason that the original form of it is found to be missing.

‘King’ and ‘queen’ are the respective English for *rājā* and *rānī* (or *rānī*, *rānī*). These two words also are in the same way, i.e., in respect of their original meaning, are found to be connected with *kins-folk* or (*kith* and) *kin*. *Kin* and *king* are both originally from the same root, OE. *cyni* (*n*) *g*, meaning ‘cunning. *Kith* (from OE. *cythth*) originally meant ‘knowledge’, then ‘known country’, and now only means near relatives or one’s most favourite one

As *jña* or *jñā* has its other affixes, so also it has so many prefixes, such as *a-jña*, *ā-jñā*, *prajñā*, *prājñā*, *vi-jña* and *va-jña*. *Yajña*, ‘sacrifice’ is in old Hindi *jāja*, and Hindi *jāg*. Beng. *yāg* (pronounced *jāg*) or *yaj*, as in *yaj-mān*, performer of the sacrifice. Looking to its inner meaning *yajña* should better be translated as ‘Sacrament’ instead of ‘Sacrifice’. For the action performed there is not so much of surrendering, but to realize the mystery of sacred knowledge that is inherent in all beings.

Ya-jña or *yaj-ñā* is found to be analysed by Sanskrit scholars as *yaj-nñ* (in its reflective or passive mood). *Nñ*, is, commonly translated as ‘non-existence’ or rather ‘non-existing’; but it is really the non-existence of all human developments that are gradually evolving into the Be-ing to be surrendered (so that the ‘A’ which is *anuttara*, can be found out with *an uttara* or ‘Answer’ to the various conflicts of the Mind or Man, that are rushing out one against another) *Yaj* (or *ya-ja*) is the birth or rebirth of the human faculties that are innate in all beings. Again, it appears that an ‘a’ or ‘i’ was surely affixed with ‘y’, otherwise, this semi-vowel, without another ‘a’ after it, cannot even be pronounced. Therefore, we find that *va* is pronounced as *ja*. Probably for joining together two vowels ‘y’ as a sort of hyphen (i.e., – ‘or’) as an intermediate (*antasthya*) sound was first introduced. And thus it is most probably originally connected with the Arabic ‘(‘ayn) or ‘(hamza), both of which are purely a laryngeal sound and as its purity in sound could not be respected in Sanskrit, it has gradually tended to a palatal sound. ‘I’ in Skt. and *ya* (as in *yā* or *jā*) is the root verb, meaning ‘to go’. *Yajña* is thus significantly interpreted as the spiritual act of realizing the ‘Spirit’ that is innate in all beings. But if we interpret with a deeper significance of every letter that

is used here, it will stand thus: *Yajña* is that spiritual action (in the name of 'A' or *anuttara*, who comes or is) coming down (or 'i') to the physical world (as one illiterate or *ajña*) and is reborn (or 'j'; cf. also *dvija*, 'twice born') with the spiritual knowledge that is innate (or *jñ*) in it, and by forsaking its lower elements (including even its highest intellectual achievements, cf. 'ñ' or 'n'), it realizes itself (or 'A') Really 'he' is the same as 'He'. And we find that Arabic *yaghñā* (or *yaghñī*) also means 'he is rich' (with spiritual knowledge), derived from the verb *ghanā* (or *ghani*), meaning 'to be rich, to be content with, to be in no need of'.

Ajña, though generally interpreted as an 'illiterate', but it may more suitably be translated as 'A jñā', the One who knows, and this know-ing is the natural bent of mind for further progress that cannot be found out through letters or reading of books, or by cultivating the *Śāstras*, without looking after the developing transformations of mind or Man from one stage to another. Or, it may also be interpreted that only the *Jñā* knows 'A', which is *anuttara*, and though 'unknowable' (cf. Skt. *ajñeya*), yet by his spiritual knowledge, he can surpass (or *ut-tr*) through all the gradual developments (or *uttara*), and thus finds out the one 'Answer' that all are the same, i.e. 'a', from which all are originated and to which they again return or mix together (with all). He who was *ghani*, (meaning 'rich' in Arabic) becomes *aghñiyā* (pl. of *aghñiyu*), by knowing that all selves are really the pluralised forms of the One Bē-ing.

This *ajña* or its so many qualified (or so-called 'pluralised') forms are the Arabic *aghñiyā*, or rather the Skt. *āgneya* (or 'fiery, cf. also Eng. *igneous*) forms of *agni*, which may well be interpreted as the feminine or active force of *ajña*. The *ajña*, though ever dynamic like *Śiva*, and his fiery power *agni* is in active force through time and space like *Durgā* and *Kālī*, is preferring to be silent like *Śava* (i.e., inactive or 'neutral' *Śiva*). Really any person without the power of spiritual knowledge (cf. *inānāgni*) inflamed in him, is like a dead body (or *śav*) without the consciousness that ever remains silent (*śava*) in him. It is also interesting to note how differently the word is used in the various dialects of India. In Bengali, it is *āg*, *āgun* or *āgun*, Hindi, Panjabi and Marathi, simply *āg*; Sindhi *āghi*, but in Oriya even the 'g' is dropped, *ña* or *agma*. The English has borrowed the Latin *ignis*, meaning

'fire' (And it is 'also' to be noted that though *agni* is masc. in Skt., *āg* is fem. in Hindi.)

Agni is really of most importance in the religious affairs of the Hindu system. With reference to *Agni* Larousse says in his *World Mythology* (pp 230-2) "The importance of this god emerges clearly from the fact that eight of the ten books of the *Rig-veda* begins with the hymns addressed to him. According to Aurobindo he is 'divine will or conscious power, and as such is the master of the universe' . . . "*Agni* is the earth, in plants ; the waters contain *Agni*, *Agni* is in stones, *Agni* is within men, *Agnis* are in cows and horses, *Agni* shines from the heavens, the atmosphere belongs to the god *Agni*. Mortals set fire to *Agni*, the bearer of oblations who loves clarified butter. The dark-kneed earth, clad in *Agni*, will make me alert and brilliant". So says a hymn in the *Atharva-veda* addressed to the earth . .

"*Agni* will serve as guide to anyone who approaches him ; he is the divine workman, the hope of men, the surest, gentlest and nearest of the gods, the immutable light placed in us so that we may see, and he is also the swiftest apprehension of swiftly moving things

"Like *Ushas* he plays an important part *vis-a-vis* the gods ; all are contained in him, he is the 'I' of all gods, he is their father and yet their son, for he introduces into creation the powers destined to bring about evolution as and when conditions are ripe for the realisation of a new phase And these powers are in actual fact, the gods Therefore, on the plane of human soul, *Agni* creates the gods in us and is the prime cause of their complex action

"According to Hindu concepts, the sacrifice *yajña* is the essential act in life. Gandhi declared it to be 'a principle which was created at the same time as humanity', and added that 'a life of sacrifice is the supreme summit of art' .. When man refuses to submit to divine will (in other words, will not agree to sacrifice), *Agni* seeks to charm rather than to chastise him". And it may also be noted that the Arabic verb *ghannā* (or *ghanni*) means 'to sing, or chant'

After giving some five derivatives of the word in his *The Vedic Etymology* (pp. 11—13) Fatah Singh opines : "*Agni* (from

a-knuy, anti-water) is also derived from *knuy* 'to wet', .. The derivation may also have the support of the etymology of Latin *ignis*. The word '*ignis*' may be derived from the negative participle '*in*' added to '*gnis*'. The word '*gnis*' would automatically correspond to Sans. '*knuy*', not only phonetically ('*g*' and '*k*' being interchangeable) but also semantically, meaning 'the wetting element' (water)". But after all, any of his derivatives does not serve the complete character of *Agni*, as envisaged in the Vedic literature. That *Agni* is really an active force working within, may be comprehended from the use of the word *agni-māndya* which though ordinarily interpreted as 'indigestion', will literally mean the quality of the inner fire that is slow (or in a bad condition) in its progress. V S Agarwala in his *Matsya Purāṇa a study* (p 155) states thus "*Agni* is said to be the mind-born son of *Brahmā* (cf. *Brahma-putra*, name of a river, which is masc, but the river *Gangā* or the Ganges, Gk. *Gaggēs*, is fem) *Brahmā* is the same as *Hiranyagarbha* or *Prāna* which was identified with *Agni*". But the idea expressed by Sir Aurobindo in his *The Life Divine* (p. 145-6) is really sublime: "In essence the gods are one existence which the sages call by different names, and in their action founded in and proceeding from the large Truth and Right *Agni* or another is said to be all the other gods, he is the one that become all, at the same time he is said to contain all the gods in himself as the nave of a wheel contains the spokes, he is the one that contains all; and yet as *Agni* is described as a separate deity, one who helps all the others, exceeds them in force and knowledge, yet is inferior to them in cosmic position ("*Devānām avamah*") and is employed by them as messenger, priest (*purohita*) and worker,—the creator of the world and father, he is yet the son born of our works, he is, that is to say, the original or the manifested indwelling Self or Divine, the One that inhabits all". That is, *Agni*, or '*ignis*' is the motive power that ignites or inspires all things or beings for further progress in evolutionary development. In Islamic literature also *nūr*, the 'Divine Light' is found to be connected with *nār* or fire, derived from the root verb *nāra*, 'to shine'. And I think the word *Nāṛāyana* (by making it of Arabic formation, *nāra*-'*ayn* or in Persian fashion *nūr*-'*ayn*, meaning the divine light of the eye, or one's own essence) in our literature should

better be interpreted 'the One whose essence or outlook is of fiery or inspiring character', instead of analysing as 'one whose place (*ayana*) is in water (*nāra*).

Ājñā, 'command' or 'order', though written in Bengali in the same way as in Skt., is pronounced *āggā*, *āgge* *āgyā* or *āggā*. In Hindi, it is *āgyā*, Panjabi *āgiā*, but Gujarati *āgnyā*, almost in the same way as Ar. *aghnyā*, pl. of *ghani* 'Command' is always from a supreme authority which can be entrusted with all certainty and relied upon with all confidence. And literally also *ājñā*, as a *vrddhi* of *ajñā*, may be interpreted as . The joy of knowing the mystery of life (and death) is all around. And consequently, every one submits to it, as is the command from the authority. It is, as if, already come upon us (or known to us) as ordained by the Authority. In *āgiā* (or *gayā*), as some dialects pronounce them, meaning thereby as translated in Beng. *ese geche*, i. e., it has already come upon us ; and after acknowledging its meaning, we are duty-bound with all-pleasure to work accordingly. *Āgge*, or *āgyā*, etc., is often used as a response to a call from the authority or superior persons. Here also the same meaning applies, i. e., "Yes, I am here, and always ready to obey the command". The word is often found to be followed by *jo hujur* or *āpnī jā balen Hujur* from Ar *huḍūr* (or *huzūr*) also means 'presence' from the root verb *hadara*, to be present, come. *Jo hujur*, thus means I am present (to obey as you command). And by *āpnī* (or *āpanī*) *yā balen*, we mean, ' (I am present to obey) as you command'.

Prajñā means (higher) intellect, or rather intuitive knowledge. Literally, it is only an advancement towards the joy to be *jñā*. And *prājñā* is that person who is proceeding to be a *jñā*. *Prājñā* is generally, interpreted as the *vrddhi* of *prajñā*; but it appears to be better interpreted as *pra+ajna*. *Vī-jñā*, in like manner, is generally interpreted as specialized *jñā*; but literally it would mean . the higher intellect is now intering into the stage of a *jñā*

That the aim of the Hindus was to be a *jñā*, may also be ascertained from their use of the affix *gā*, as a substitute in all their future actions. As we use *kar giyā* (or rather *kargā*), i. e., 'Do whatever you are to do, after going (there), so also in Hindi is used *karunga* (or I shall do). This *gā* is said to be

from H. *gayā* (or Beng. *giyā*), present participle of *jānā*, to go', which afterwards, as John Beames remarks, changed to *gā*. And opining thus he says. The meaning of the tense is thus, 'I have gone (that) I may do', a construction which recalls our English idiom 'I am going to do' (*Ibid*, p. III. 161). But this *gā* also appears to be from *jñā*, and from this *jñā* has been derived the word '*Ga-yā*', the sacred city of the Hindus, the place of the Gnostics, where the people go to offer their oblations showing respect to their forefathers, who are believed to be living there as so many immortal souls, though apparently said to be dead (or bereft of their earthly frame). For, according to the Hindus, the soul is immortal (cf. *amrtasya putrāḥ*, 'sons of immortality') and is ever living, and the deeper meanings of their words (cf. *śabda-brahma*, i. e., the words are really the different aspect of the One *Brahma*) also testify to their faith.

In this connection, I like to mention that Language has its own Law, and always of universal sequence. Any 'word' as uttered by us, is the *Logos*, constructed, as it appears to be, by our 'logical' (cf. Gk. *logike*, Skt. *laukika*) reasonings. But really the 'Word' is, as if, from the One First Person (cf. Skt. *uttama purusa*) delivered to the people of the world who are all his Second Persons of the Trinity, i. e., 'A' and 'B', and all others beside these two are 'C' and the rest forming the '*Alphabet*'. Symbolically *A* is *alpha*, who is ever *a-lip-ta*, yet the one 'Leader' guiding all his generations, the Gk. 'Beta' (cf. Beng. *beṭā*, 'son'). And those who are not yet aware of this fact are only the 'C' (cf. Beng. *se*, he, she or it), and other letters *see-king* after 'A'. In other words, 'A' is *a-jñā*, 'B' forming 'V' (or 'B') in Skt., are respectively the *jñā*, representing 'v' and its coefficient 'b', including in it the series of letters in Skt. forming the 'media' (Skt. *madhya*, or *madhyama*, i. e., my mediums), and those third type of letters is the 'C' class, forming the 'tenuis'. These 'tenuis' are nothing but the hard or surd *mutes*, who have no power to express of things intellectual, as they are yet roaming in the animal or at best in the vital plane with their conflicts of nature. Accordingly it is well justified when our versatile scholar John Beames remarks on the nature of language thus. So true is it that man is not the master of language, but merely the instrument by which the process of speech develops themselves according to natural laws.

Man, in fact, makes nothing, nature makes, and man merely places materials in such a position that the forces of nature can work on them. Man collects the wood, applies the fire, and sets the pot on it, but the forces of nature thus brought together boil the water on it. So man utters sounds by means of his vocal organs, but nature controls the form which his utterance shall take, and man unconsciously works out great and deep-reaching developments of speech far beyond his cognizance or comprehension" (*Ibid*, p. 11. 343)

The conjunct *jñ* is found to be transformed also into *ghñ*, *ghn*, and *nñ*. And on this analogy, there are many words in Skt., as used also in other Indian dialects, that may be interpreted in the above manner. We have already hinted on the meaning of *nñ*, while interpreting *yajñā*. And with reference to the interpretation of *Nārāyaṇa*, we have already connected *ayana* with Ar 'ayn. But its significance is more explicit in the word *nayan* meaning 'eye'. In the real sense of the words, *nayan* means human out-look, and *ayan* the spiritual vision of the Eye. *Nayan* (or turning into Arabic formation *na'yn*) is, as if a *na-'ñ* (or *n'ain*) *tatpurus samās*, meaning, one who has not the vision of the spiritual eye (which is really the essence of a person). So also we find that the *Bāul*-poet *Lālan* sings "*Āmār janma-andha man-nayan, Guru tumi nitya sacetan*" (or My mental eye is born blind; and you, my Guide, are ever conscious"). Again, "*Nayan-cānd prasanna hay yār, Sakal cānd drṣṭa hay tār*, One whose *nayan-cānd* (lit. Moon that guides the mental vision, referring to the Spiritual Guide, or rather one's inner conscience) is pleased, can see all the Moon (or minds)" The other words, like *Tri-nayanā*, one who possesses the three eyes (i. e., one with spiritual vision, referring to the gods) and *āyata* (cf Eng 'eye'-d) *locana*, i. e., one with the extended eyes (and thus possessing the power to 'look-on' for spiritual vision),—only clearly show that *ayna* was originally connected with the Arabic 'ayn (in its causative sense) Thus in *jñ*, as *ñ* is shown as shortened form of *nñ*, so also it may be that *n* has been the substitute for 'j', as found in many words already discussed.

The meaning of the conjunct *jñ* as a substitute for *j-nñ*, *nñ*, *gñ* or *ghñ*, is more explicit, when we find that in Sanskrit itself there is an affix, *ghañ* (or *ghñ*) indicating the expression of an

action in its aspect as a thing And thus Bhartṛhari, the philosophical expounder of the grammarian Pāṇini, says in his *Vākyapadiya* (III.8.47) "The expression of action as a process depends upon the root and its aspect as a thing depends for its expression on suffixes like *ghañ*" Again, (as explanatory notes. III.8 60) he writes: "Just as *bhāva* is the meaning of *bhū*, so is *pāka* that of *pac* and *tyāga* that of *tyaj* and this is the meaning of the suffix *ghan*" What he really likes to say is this . With the annihilation of all previous experiences, is brought forward that which it originally possessed (i. e., the essence of the thing). Probably taking *ghan* as an original word, there have been also different words found in our languages, such as *ghanṭā* 'bell' or Eng. *gong*. Spiritually signified both *ghanṭā* and *gong* really mean: With the death-knell, is re-sounding the joy (of knowledge) which it originally possessed. The Arabic *ghannā*, as already referred to, may also be compared with *Ghanṭā*, as used in Bengali, as *ghanṭā karā*, meaning thereby, 'can do nothing' also really signifies that 'one who has become aware of the mystery of life and death, does not care for any fear from all around'. *Ghantā* also means an 'hour'. An 'hour', like a *ghanṭā*, is only a period of time, or duration of a stage (of evolutionary development) And we find *hour* to be derived from Gk *hora*, a 'season' (cf. also words like, *horizon*, *horoscope*, etc). The Gk. *Horus*, our *Harī* or *Hara*, and Arabic *hāris(u)*, 'watchman, guard', may well be connected with *hour*, as they are only supervisors of some of the evolutionary development of the soul

From *ghñ* is also derived words like, *go-ghna* or *śatrughna*. *Goghna* is ordinarily translated as a 'cow-eater' or 'sacrificer of the cow'. But spiritually signified it will mean. One who has known what the world (cf Skt *go*) really is, and by knowing the real process (cf. Eng *go*) of life, they enjoy (cf. *bhog*, which also subsequently meant 'eating' the remains of what the Divine beings enjoyed) the re-mains of the world with all pleasure. *Śatrughna* is, likewise, interpreted as, 'killer or conqueror of the enemy'. 'Conqueror', no doubt, but in its inner significance, it is to conquer the passions of the Self, who are the real enemy of even the highest intellectual person, and when he can know the secret of controlling or ruling the passions by sacrificing or merging them to the obedience of the spiritual knowledge, then only he is a

kṣa-tri-ya proceeding to the stage of a *Brahman*. Literally interpreted *Śatrughna* will mean : While transforming (cf. Skt. *tr-* 'to cross over') oneself from its vital plane (*śa*) to the mental stage, the soul is engrossed (cf. 'u') on its way and is thus in the conflicts of good and evil; and only by spiritual knowledge (cf. *ghñ* or *jñ*) the soul may be the conqueror of all the conflicts in the mind (cf. *ghn-a*)

In the *Rāmāyana* also *Śatrughna*, a type character, is figured as a *kṣa-tri-ya*, and ruling as a *Satr-ap*, to protect *Bharata*, symbolized as the vital *Prāna*, and his two other brothers (viz. *Rāma* and *Lakṣmana*) are respectively the characters of the stage of *Brahma*-hood, figuratively the fourth (i.e., the first or highest) State of mental development, and the true type (viz. *Lakṣmana*) of an ideal *Śūdra*, who is ever in obedience to the dictates of his Master, the intuitive mental faculty in a Person'. Figuratively interpreted the four brothers combined together or in unison with one another form the one absorbing character in the *Rāmāyana*, where *Rāma*, the highest faculty in a Man, takes only the main part. To make it more explicit within a limited space, I like only to mention that the two rival parties there are at conflicts in their stages of the highest mental faculty in a Man. One is following the principle of *Brahma*-hood, being aware of what *a-jña* really means ; and the other a believer in *agnosticism*, i.e., one who believes that the destiny of Divine Life, the Perfect Manhood, cannot be achieved by a man, and mortality is the necessary consequence of a mortal being. To the latter party this material world is the end of life, and to the former the spiritual gains are the only principle in life.

Really it wonders how *Indra-jit* can be won by *Lakṣmana*. The *rsis* of India at least believed that one observing the strict rules of a *Brahma-cāri* for the phase of a life under the guidance of his pure Conscience, can have easy control over or defeat the dominance of the six senses, physical, vital and mental, typified in the character of *Indrajit*. And it is no surprise for even a true devotee, mimicing the principles of life with firm belief in his Master that he (referring to *Hanumān*, a true type of a mimic as is found in an animal like a 'monkey' or in the servile nature of a *śūdra*) can even surpass the Ocean (of conflicts that stand between the stage of ideal *Brahma*-hood and its preceding stages).

Again, it is also of no wonder to those spiritualists that a *satī* (or *Sitā*, under the guidance of her own Spirit of life) can even come over through the trial and ordeal of life (cf. *agni-parikṣā*) by passing even through fire that becomes inactive to make any harm to such a personality. But all requires the firm belief to that immortality of a Be-ing who has really no death or any ending of the process of life. Therefore Śrī Aurobindo in his *The Life Divine* (p. 88) truly remarks. "If we say that pain is a trial and an ordeal, we do not solve the problem". The problem must be found out by becoming a ready 'Answer' to the mystery of life which is the Perfect Manhood in its attaining the 'Divine Life' and a *jñā* in its true sense of the term.

In conclusion, I like to say that the conflicts of all these be it in life or in the meaning of a word - lie on the fact that the true meaning of the letter 'a' is not known to us. It is called the *Anuttara* (by the *Vaidik* *ṛsis*, i.e., the 'seers' that were '*jñā*'), the only 'neutral' vowel (or sound, or rather with the soundness of its own Spirit), that is ever *a-lp-ta* (cf. Per. *alif*) and consequently ever a-live (from OE *a-lif*, dative of *lif* or life), not engrossed in any affair; and it is also to be noted that no word (of action) can even be pronounced (or acted upon) without its help. In the same way *a-vana* (or *an-uttara*), though colourless or beyond description, is only the clue to all colours or descriptions. Therefore, truly remarks our modern spiritualist in the fashion of the old seers of India "A diversity in oneness is the law of manifestation; the supramental unification and integration must harmonise these diversities, but to abolish them is not the intention of the Spirit in Nature" (*The Life Divine*, p. 790). 'A' has really no meaning of non-entity or dis-integration, but it is the 'supramental unification and integration' of all souls that are apparently different from it. And this supramental unification of all souls has been symbolised in the personification of the word *a-jñā*. Thus the conjunct *jñā* seems to be one of the instances of the original laryngeal *ghayn* and 'ayn of the Semitic letters, dropped to guttural and then to palatal sound in its varied forms, and the word *ajñā* completely synchronizes with the Arabic construction like *aghna* (*un-'aynun*), i.e., (the essence of the Spirit or the spiritual eye) was ever

ON A HISTORY OF JAUNPUR¹

M R. TARAFDAR

While selecting a unit of investigation, a writer is expected to justify the scope of his work, but the kingdom of Jaunpur does not present much difficulty in this respect. It had a spectacular genesis as a Tughluq province and then it persisted for about a century contributing much to architecture, literature, painting, music and mysticism which had a wider historical significance. Unlike Bengal, Orissa, Vijaynagar, some of the Muslim states of the Deccan, and Gujrat, Jaunpur had no access to the sea and this disadvantage seems to have considerably affected the economic life of the kingdom. It is true that it was carrying on a considerable volume of trade along the river routes which must have been quite limited because of its perpetual enmity and warfare with the Delhi Sultanate, Bengal, Orissa and Malwa. Even without going into the details of the maritime commerce of India in the fifteenth century, it may be said with an amount of certainty that the coastal regions of the subcontinent had become closely linked up with the complicated network of an international trade which not only led to their commercial and industrial progress, but also significantly expedited the growth of new classes in these regions. This social mobility must have been either totally absent or restricted to a great extent in Jaunpur, for the factors likely to activate and sustain such a process, seem to have been not-existent in that country. So the medieval pompous court with its generous patronage to cultural pursuits and military activities over a century must have been dependent on the agricultural economy sustained by the fertile land the country possessed. How far this agricultural base of the state remained unaffected by the continuous process of

1. Mian Muhammad Saeed. *The Sharqi Sultanate of Jaunpur A Political and Cultural History*. University of Karachi, 1972, pp. XXIX and 380 including XIX illustrations, maps, 8½" X 5½"

warfare into which Jaunpur was involved, is a matter of investigation. One cannot expect discussions on these fundamental problems from the author of the monograph who does not even indirectly refer to them and who has called the work *A Political and Cultural History* without explaining the much controversial concepts of 'Politics' and 'Culture'. From whatever he has written, it seems that the term 'Politics' has been used to indicate such exciting phenomena as battles, expeditions, conquests or defeats and annexations or territorial loss resulting from defeats. The term 'Culture' perhaps covers in this monograph the sumtotal of the intellectual activities and religio-philosophical ideas and movements. It is surprising to note that political institutions which are but the most powerful pillars of a state are not even mentioned and the monograph looks awfully deficient excluding as it does a chapter or even a section on administration. It is true that the few *Sharqī* inscriptions which sometimes contain such technical terms as *shiq*, *muqta* and *khitta* as well as the limited number of coins deciphered so far, do not at all supply adequate information about the administrative institutions. But it does not appear to be difficult to write on the administrative system of an agriculture-based country, for in ancient and medieval India, such states as Jaunpur, used to follow a stereotyped pattern of administration with local variations. The works utilised by the author for writing the different chapters of the monograph, contain a certain amount of materials throwing light on the subject and the chain of *rājās*, chieftains and other kinds of intermediaries connecting the king with the peasantry that we very often come across in the author's descriptions of the military activities, could have been easily built into a section on the agrarian system and similar other details found frequently, organised in the form of a valuable chapter on administration.

The method of writing followed in the work is what historians call 'The Scissors and Paste Method' according to which the available materials are put together without subjecting them to a process of critical thinking. The method is best exemplified in the chapters on architecture, cultural activities and mystic movement containing an overwhelming profusion of information, but showing no attempts to get at the depth of things through a process of interpretation or critical analysis. It may also be noted that the primary and

secondary works used for writing the book and put together at the end in the form of an unscientific kind of bibliography, have nowhere been assessed so that the reader is left in the dark about their intrinsic value and reliability.

The chapter on architecture is but a descriptive account of buildings, largely borrowed from Fuhrer, Brown and others. One is surprised to note the absence of Marshall whose account of the pre-Mughal Indian architecture published in the third volume of *The Cambridge History of India*,² contains many original theories and ideas appropriated by Percy Brown without acknowledgement.³ Even the presence of Tughluq elements in the *Sharqī* buildings casually mentioned (p.134), has been discussed at length by Marshall, Brown and others. The elevated platform of the *Sharqī* mosque with an impressive, domed entrance by the middle of each cloister, the huge portal of the sanctuary assuming the form of a tapering Egyptian pylon, the four-centred tendency of the arch with spear-head *motif*, the tapering towers and buttresses and above all the rhythm and harmony created by the three domed entrances and the massive portal, corresponding with each other, must have come from the Tughluq architecture. But the origin of this kind of architectural style can perhaps be located in some Persian mosques which have vaulted entrances on the four sides creating a kind of balance and symmetry. Preference for the dome in the Indian mosques was perhaps an innovation of the Indian architects who thought that this kind of roofing would be more durable than the vault which needed a kind of permanent centering. While mentioning the durable nature of the vaulted roof of the transept of the *Jāmi'* mosque, the writer does not tell us why it has durability; but we know, this can easily be ascribed to the four pointed arches placed transversely in the transept in the form of a permanent kind of centering not only to carry the pressure of the vault but also to transmit it to the thick wall on either side and the vault also consists of stone slabs placed over the arches. Of the constructional features of the dome of the sanctuary,

2. T.W. Haig (ed.). *Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1931, the last chapter.

3. P. Brown *Indian Architecture . Islamic Period*, Bombay, reprint, cf. pp. 1-94.

the treatment lifted from Fuhrer and Brown creates confusion, for the author does not notice the squinches and arches through which the phase of transition has been attained. He borrows a fundamental mistake from Fuhrer when he states that the *Jāmi'* mosque has a double dome. This method of domical construction does not appear in India till the erection of Humāyūn's tomb at Delhi by the middle of the sixteenth century A. D. Perhaps the highly elevated outline of the dome misled Fuhrer into thinking that the dome had two shells. But this elevation has been attained through the tiers of arcades and brackets, as we notice also inside the dome of Sher Shāh's mausoleum at Sasaram. Following the Western authors, the writer has called the two-storied room on either side of the central hall a *zenana* gallery which is said to have met the spiritual requirements of the ladies. It is quite known that Muslim ladies do not participate in congregational prayers and the gallery in question was perhaps meant for the accommodation of the kings and princes to whom protection was provided by the perforated stone grills covering the upper apartment. This feature seems to be a transformation of the *maqsūrah* of the non-Indian mosques, whose origin can be traced back to the mosque of the first Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiyah. The mosques, tombs, forts and shrines included in the particular chapter need a broad classification in accordance with their structural characters through which it must have been possible to detect the evolution of their styles. Moreover, whenever a particular cultural unit is under investigation, it is in need of comparison with a similar unit which brings out in bold relief the general and particular features of the unit studied. The buildings of Jaunpur, Bengal, Gujrat, Malwa and the Delhi Sultanate betray a considerable degree of structural and decorative similarity and dissimilarity which can perhaps be explained against a wider historical perspective.

Following Moti Chandra, the author says that the book illustrations from Jaunpur "belong to the Western Indian tradition, i. e., to the Pre-Muslim art of Rajputana" (p.209). The protruding further eye of the figures, the arrangement of different scenes in order to indicate distance, angularity of the faces, staring vacant eyes and vigorous drawing of lines seen even in these badly reproduced paintings clearly indicate that they belong to the Rājasthānī school which does not seem to have originated before the coming of

the Muslims. It cannot be denied that this school absorbed a great deal of elements from the West Indian, Gujrati or Apabhramśa style. The regional elements are perhaps limited within the decorative features along the border panels of some of the illustrations. The Jaunpur paintings invite comparison with the *Devāsanapada-Kalpasūtra* illustrations from Mandu dated in 1439 A. D.,⁴ the Lahore Museum and the Bhārat Kalābhavan illustrations of the *Chandāin*⁵ and also those of the *Niyamat nāmāh*⁶ of Malwa. The author has depended on Moti Chandra's *Jaina Miniature From Western India* published in 1949 and has not consulted such authoritative writings as W. G. Archer's *Central Indian Painting, Indian Painting*,⁷ *Marg*, Vol. IX (1958), No. 2, exclusively devoted to discussions on the Rājasthāni painting and also the monograph on the illustrations of the *Chandāin* published in 1967 from the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, under the joint authorship of Karl Khandalavala and Moti Chandra.

As the author has written a long chapter on architecture and a section of reasonable length on music and painting, one can naturally expect at least a small section on calligraphy to be written on the basis of the styles of writing exhibited by the coins, inscriptions and manuscripts copied in the *Sharqī* period. Some of the gold coins show on the reverse the Organ Pipe Type of Tughrā in which the vertical shafts of certain letters are arranged as if in a procession.⁸ The section on music which is also of an informative nature, does not include the name of the Sanskrit work *Sangitāśiromanī* composed in the reign of Ibrāhīm *Sharqī*. The chapters on Arabic, Persian, Hindi or

4. Karl Khandalavala and Moti Chandra 'A Consideration of An Illustrated MS. From Mandapadurga (Māndu) Dated 1439 A D', *Lalit Kalā*, No 6, October, 1965.

5. Rai Krisnadas 'An Illustrated Awadhī MS of Laur-Chanda In the Bharat Kalābhavan', *Lalit Kalā*, 1-2, April, 1955—March, 1956, p.66 ff, M R. Tarafdar 'Illustrations of the Chandāin in the Central Museum, Lahore', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Vol VIII (1963), No. 2, pp 109-115 and illustrations

6. R Skelton 'The *Niyamatnāmāh* A Landmark in Malwa Painting', *Marg*, XII, 1959, 3, p. 44 ff and illustrations.

7. *Central Indian Painting*, The Faber Gallery of Oriental Art, London ; *Indian Painting*, London, 1958

8. M. M. Saeed *op cit.*, p. 349, nos. 3-7 in the lower enclosure.

Brajabuli literature and mystic movement look like a catalogue of the biographies of poets, litterateurs and sūfīs and of the titles of works composed by some of them. The author does not analyse the literary and mystic trends likely to be indicated by the contents of this huge body of literature, for he does not seem to have read them. That the culture complex of the time contains both simple, folk elements and comparatively sophisticated urban traditions, seems quite clear. Thus Qutban wrote the *Mrgāvatī* in the Awadhī dialect versifying the popular folk tale of *Mṛgāvatī* and *Rāj Kumār*. The Sūfī symbolism represented by the story does not affect its human elements. Although three editions of the poem have appeared in India,⁹ the writer states on the basis of *Misra Bandhu Vinod*, that the work was composed in 1501, whereas the colophons of the work give 909 A. H. or 1560 Samvat/1503 A.D., as the date of its composition. The urban element was represented by the classical music, architecture and Persian poems following Indo-Persian traditions. The earliest Awadhī poem *Chandāin* composed by Mawlānā Dā'ūd in 781 A.H./1379 A.D. was translated into Persian by the celebrated Šūfī 'Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī who interpolated a section on *Mīrāj* absent in the original poem. Thus the new version shows a tendency towards Islamisation. But the poem as a whole must have retained the sūfī elements demonstrated by the few surviving Persian verses referring to the symbolical tree whose branches and fruits are said to be out of human reach¹⁰.

The kingdom of Jaunpur had illustrious centres of learning ; but the book under review does not give us an opportunity to know the literary and mystic traditions which are historically more significant than the biographies of šūfīs and writers. Occasional mention of the beliefs and practices of some sūfīs, as we come across on pp. 224, 226 and 278, are so sporadic that they are

9. Kutuvana-kṛta *Mṛgāvatī*, ed. Sibgopal Misra, Prayag, 1963, the same work, ed. Paramesvarilal Gupta, Benares, 1967 and ed. Mataprasad Gupta, Agra, 1968.

10. cf. *Latā'if-i-Quddūsī*, Muṭtaba Press, Delhi, 1311, A. H.; pp. 99-100. The Awadhī verses in question appear in stanza 35, p. 113 in the *Chandāin*, ed. P. L. Gupta and in stanza 57, pp. 54-55 in M. P. Gupta's edition.

of a very limited value. The *Malfūzāt*, *Maktūbāt* and the biographies of the sūfis, sometimes cited in the work are full of rich materials containing philosophical ideas and mystic practices. The late Tughluq rule and the Sharqī regime cover a significant period when the Muslim mind was not only absorbed into such studies as *Tafsīr*, *Hadīth*, *Fiqh* and *Kalām*, but also was considerably contributing to the growth of Awadhī language and literature which ultimately assumed an all-Indian character. The schools of architecture and painting also show a process of assimilation of Indian and Islamic elements of which the author does not seem to be aware.

Even as a province of the Tughluq kingdom, Jaunpur put on a semblance of independence, when its governor Fath Khān Tughluq was given the right to issue coins in his own name from *Iqlīm al-Sharq* or Jaunpur and Patna in 761 A H /1359 A. D. and 763 A H /1361 A. D.¹¹ Such an important phenomenon is not at all mentioned in the book. It is quite natural that the reign of Ibrāhīm Sharqī, the most powerful ruler of the dynasty, has been dealt with at considerable length. But some useful materials, though utilised by the scholars of this part of the world, have escaped the author's notice. The Cheng Ho mission did not perhaps reach Jaunpur, nor had the country any permanent diplomatic relationship with China. The Chinese account *Ming-she* (ch. 326) contains this information:¹² "In the tenth year of Yong-lo (1412) an ambassador was sent to that kingdom with the Imperial mandate and gold embroidered silk and decorated clothes were presented to the King Yi-pu-la (Ibra or Ibrāhīm). In the 18th Year Yong-lo (1420) the ambassador of Bengal informed (the Chinese Court) that their king had invaded Bengal several times. Ho-hien was sent with the orders of the Emperor to tell him (i.e., the king of Jaunpur) that by being good to a neighbour he could save his own. Presents of silk and money were given to him". Similar information is found in ch. 340 of *Ming-she* (compiled in 1739 with earlier materials) and also in *Su-t'ong-tien* completed in 1769.¹³ Thus Ibrāhīm's

11. H. N. Wright *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, Delhi, 1936, p. 222, nos. 245-60.

12. *Viśvabhāratī Annals*, 1945, Vol. I, p. 100.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

several attacks on Bengal within the second decade of the fifteenth century vaguely reported in many other sources, get confirmation from the Chinese accounts cited above. The *Sangitaśiromani* has the following lines : "This wise Ibrāhīm with the shower of the clouds of the proud and roaring elephants, horses and soldiers, quenched the fire in which the śakas (Muslims) were burning like insects to death and turned Gauḍ again into a śaka (Muslim) country having converted his politically experienced son into a Turuska" (Muslim).¹⁴ Undoubtedly these pieces of information coming from a diversity of sources, could have enriched the account of Ibrāhīm's attacks on Bengal, written by Dr. Saeed. According to Muhammad Bihamid Khānī¹⁵ Ibrāhīm attacked Bengal in 1435. The author tells us that "None of our chronicles have mentioned this except Muhammad Bihamid Khanī"¹⁶ But the incident has been noticed by Charles Stewart who presumably based his account on a manuscript of *Firīḡtah (History of Bengal)*, Calcutta, 1903, Baṅgavāsī edition, pp. 110-12). The additional information supplied by Bihamid Khānī is that the Sharqī Sultān besieged Ekdālā. Shāh Rūkh had intervened perhaps on this occasion,¹⁷ not in the reign of Mahmūd Sharqī (1443-57) as stated by the author.¹⁸ The writer has taken notice of Ibrāhīm's coins dated between 844 A. H./1440 A. D. and 847 A. H./1444 A. D., which show that Ibrāhīm was alive till 1444 A. D., unless it is presumed that some of these issues were posthumous. So the Sharqī attack on Bengal recorded in 'Abdur Razzaq's account (846 A. H./1442-43 A. D.) must have taken place in Ibrāhīm's reign, not in the reign of Mahmūd as believed by Dr. Saeed. Thus the length of Ibrāhīm's reign (1401-1440 A. D.) and that of Mahmūd (1440 A. D.-1457 A. D.) together with the account of the invasion of Bengal as given by the author need revision, if we want to attach any importance to

14. For the Sanskrit passages, *Catalogue of Sanskrit MS in A. S. B.* iv, p. 54, quoted by S. Mokhopadhyay *Vāṅgālār Itihāsē Duśa Bachhar : Svādhin Sultānder Āmal*, Calcutta, 1966, pp. 118-19.

15. *Tārīkh-i-Muhammādī*, p. 427 ff, cited by M. M. Saeed : *op. cit.*, p. 59-60.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

17. M. R. Tarafdar 'Bengal's Relations with Her Neighbours . A Numismatic Study', *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, ed. A.B.M. Habibullah, Dacca, 1966, pp. 239-40

18. M. M. Saeed . *op. cit.* p. 65.

numismatic evidence. Bengal influence on the second type of Ibrāhīm's coins has been casually noticed.¹⁹ On the basis of several gold coins of Bengal and Jaunpur exhibiting the Tughra character on one side it has been suggested that these numismatic records also indicate conflicts between the two countries in the reigns of Ibrāhīm, Mahmūd and Ḥusain.²⁰ The post-regnal coins of Ḥusain presumably issued from Colgong indicate that 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusain Shāh of Bengal (1494 A. D.—1519 A. D.) was trying to maintain "the Sharqī counterpoise to Delhi with a view to countering the growing Lodī influence in Bihar and on the western outskirt of Bengal."²¹ In the *Sarasvatīvilāsam*, a *smṛti* work in Sanskrit composed in the early fifteenth century by Pratāp Rudra or his court poet Lolā Lakṣmīdhara, it has been claimed : *Śaraṇāgata yavunāpurādhiśvara-husanasāhā-suratrāna--śaraṇaraksana*²² The Orissan king gave shelter and protection to Ḥusain Shāh, the Lord of Yavunāpura, who had sought shelter from him. Some scholars think that this Ḥusain Shāh was the ruler of Bengal. But he has been uniformly called 'Gauḍarāja'-or 'Gaudendra' in the Orissan inscriptions. The term 'Yavunāpura' in the above passage is perhaps a corrupt form of 'Javanapura' identical with Jaunpur.²³ It seems that the last Sharqī ruler in his desperate attempt to regain the kingdom after 1495 A. D. had sought help from the king of Orissa.

The description of the Jaunpur coinage appearing in Appendix A. p. 29 ff. does not seem to be satisfactory. Depending on several Catalogues of coins and papers, the writer has simply indicated the types and weights of the coins, but not in minute details. It seems that the few gold coins discovered so far, were, like those of the Bengal Sultanate, of a commemorative nature, as indicated by the heavy weight of some of the pieces tending to exceed the 172.2-grain standard accepted in the Delhi Sultanate

19. *Ibid*, p. 296.

20. N.K. Bhattasali *Commemoration Volume*, *op. cit* pp. 240-41

21. *Ibid*, p. 249.

22. Quoted by Sukumar Sen *Madhya Yuger Vāṅgālā O Vāṅgālī*, Calcutta, 1358 B. S. p. 22, for a slightly different text cf. S. Mukhopadhyay *op cit* 306.

23. M.M. Saeed *op. cit.* p. 118.

and also in Bengal. The probability of this hypothesis grows almost into certainty when they exhibit Bengal influence²⁴ or signs of the Tughluq model (Saeed p 295). If we remember the cheapness of commodities obtaining in those days, it can hardly be presumed that these pieces were serving as medium of exchange. The silver coins generally conform to the *sata-ratika* or 172.2-grain and in many cases 175-grain standard and the fractional issues also seem to have been equated to it by a certain ratio. That Jaunpur suffered from a chronic shortage of the precious metals is indicated by the limited number of coins having also a limited variety of types when compared with the silver issues of some other regional kingdoms. Gold and silver used to come from South China, Japan and some western Asiatic or African countries and the coastal regions of India had an advantage of exchanging them for the varieties of textile goods they used to manufacture. Jaunpur's geographical position and the precarious situation it had to confront through constant fighting with the neighbouring states must have prevented it from getting gold or silver as easily as to suit the demand of its economy or coinage.

The writer has said that the Hindus received much tolerance from the *Sharqi* rulers and all that he has said in support of this statement is that these Muslim rulers were very often helped by the Hindu chiefs against their opponents.²⁵ In those days the Hindu chiefs had almost direct links with the peasantry and but for their help revenue administration would have been impossible. These Indian barons also had the obligation to render military service to the Muslim rulers. This kind of mutual relationship was dictated by necessity, not by religious tolerance. How insensible to the Hindu subjects was Ibrāhīm *Sharqi*, the greatest ruler of the dynasty, is proved by the destruction of the Atalā Devī's temple and erection of a mosque by him over its ruins. Fīrūz Tughluq who also wanted to demolish the temple with a view to building a mosque there "abandoned the idea when the local Hindus strongly and unanimously objected" (Saeed, 129). Ibrāhīm built the Jhangri mosque "with the material of Vijaychandra's

24. N K. Bhattasali *Commemoration Volume*, *op cit.* pp. 240-41.

25. *op. cit* pp 43, 195 etc

temple of Mukutghat. . ."²⁶ Dr. Saeed's account of the Sharqī architecture shows that the Muslim rulers had similar other structures raised on the sites of ruined temples and fallen Hindu structures. This kind of intolerance was not rare in other Muslim states of medieval India.

Dr. Saeed rightly observes that Bengal's claim over Vidyāpati is unjustified. In addition to writing a few works in Sanskrit, the poet composed his songs mostly in Maithilī, a branch of the Pūrbī Hindī and a few in Avahattha. Neither geographically nor linguistically does he belong to Bengal. His songs became very popular in the sixteenth century Bengal when Gauḍīya Vaisnavism had made the cult of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa a living force in the region. The Bengali claim over Vidyāpati is an emotional chauvinism having hardly any rational bias.

At two places,²⁷ the writer has mentioned Nasīb Shāh of Bengal with dates 1493-1518-19 A. D. which are incorrect. It is categorically stated that ". . . Tirhut remained subject to the Jaunpur kingdom for about a hundred years"²⁸ from the time when Ibrāhīm Sharqī had subdued it in the second decade of the fifteenth century. But the *Bayāḍ* of Mullāh Taqiya clearly states that the province was occupied by Bārbak Shāh.²⁹

On the authority of the *Khazīnat al-Asfiyā* the author has included among the writings of Sayyid Muḥammad Ghauth, the *Baḥr al-Ḥayāt*, which is actually a Persian translation done by one of the Ṣūfī's disciples, from the Arabic *Hauḍ al-Ḥayāt*, a translation or recension of the Sanskrit Yogik-tantrik text *Amṛtakunda*, used by the Nāthapanthīs. A second Arabic translation under the title *Hauḍ al-Ḥayāt* presumably prepared by the celebrated Ṣūfī Ibn al-Arabī, has been published with an abridged French translation by Yousuf Husain.³⁰ There is a well preserved MS. of the above

26. *Ibid*, p. 134

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 37 and 302.

28. *Ibid*. p. 52

29. *Bayāḍ*, quoted in *Mu'āẓir*, May-June, 1949, p. 10.

30. 'Hauz al Hayat, la version Arabe de l'Amratkund', *Journal Asiatique*, CCXXIII (1928), pp. 300-344.

Persian version in the India Office Library.³¹ There is still an incomplete MS. of the *Bahr al-Hayāt*, a recension of the original Persian edition, written by Ḥusain of Gwalior at Broach under the direction of his preceptor having the title of *Ghiyath al-Dārāyn Ḥakīm al-Kawnayn*. It has ten chapters and twenty-one drawings illustrating *yogik āsanās*, executed presumably in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. The paintings belong to the Mughal school.³² The printed version of the Persian recension is quite rare.

Appendix D does not give correct dates of some rulers of the states of medieval India.

Collection and organisation of a huge mass of materials in the form of a monograph of considerable size may be regarded as a highly laudable work. The book is a mine of information and the author's language is also quite pleasant. Although this edition has not been able to fulfil the expectations it has justly aroused the next edition may grow into a more valuable monograph giving a proper perspective of history.

31. H. Ethé *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the India Office Library*, London, 1903, Vol I, pp. 1113-14, no. 2002

32. Thomas W. Arnold *The library of Chester Beatty, A Catalogue of The Indian Miniatures*, ed J.V.S. Wilkinson, London, 1936, Vol.I. text, pp. 80-82, vol III. illustrations, physical postures like *Garbhāsana* and *Kumbhakāsana* are illustrated.

OFFICIAL IDEAS OF REPRESENTATION IN THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODIES IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

QAMRUN RAHMAN

[Communicated by M. R. Tarafdar]

It has been said that the official policy of the British Government in India from 1861 onwards was to associate Indians in an increasing degree with their British rulers in the administration of the country, and there was no intention to develop self-governing institutions until the Indian Act of 1919 was passed.¹ But the determination of a Viceroy belonging to the Liberal group of politicians to develop local self-governing institutions in India in the eighteen eighties leads us to a different conclusion. Whatever might have been the attitude in England, Ripon's Government in India inaugurated a scheme to foster political self-consciousness among Indians through local government. Ripon was appointed as Viceroy of India by Gladstone whose doctrine was that the rightful object of Britain's policy in India should be that : "India is to be governed for India and as far as may be proved practicable by Indians".² As a supporter of Gladstone doctrine, Ripon believed that representative institutions should be developed in India. But his policy of extending self-government was not based only on beliefs or doctrinal grounds. It arose, as Ripon himself wrote later, "naturally out of circumstances" with which Ripon was obliged to deal in the ordinary course of business. In dealing with that business Ripon found opportunity to add his own liberal impulse.

The Viceroy's liberalism was stimulated by the equally liberal Finance Member of his Executive Council, Evelyn Baring.

1. Sir M. L. Gwyer and A. Appadorai *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution 1921-47*, vol I, (London, 1957) p. xxvii.
2. J. L. Hammond and M. R. D. Foot *Gladstone and Liberalism*, (London, 1952), p. 77.

It was the Finance Department Chief who brought up the idea of making a change in the existing system. Baring in turn received stimulus from T. C. Hope, the secretary to his department. While discussion was going on whether Indian local self-governing institutions should be granted more power and responsibilities, Ripon enquired about the elective system in the existing Indian municipalities. During such discussions Baring and Hope became aware of the Viceroy's own views. In considering the extension of financial devolution they emphasised the need to foster municipal government in India. Ripon thus found two advocates in Hope and Baring of a change in direction in the Government of India

Ripon relieved Lytton of the Viceroyalty at Simla on 8th June, 1880. He was conscious of the policy of the British Government towards conferring more independence and power to municipal bodies and greater extension of the electoral franchise at home. Influenced by this domestic policy of the British Government, Ripon favoured encouraging municipal life and action in India.³ During the first tour of Ripon through the Punjab, Sind and other parts of Bombay Presidency in the months of November and December, 1880 the question of Municipal Administration and the possibility of the extension of a representative system in the constitution of those bodies in India was in various ways brought under his notice which led him to consider the possibility of extending the system of election for members of Municipal Councils of larger towns in India.⁴ As the question of Municipal Administration was left entirely to the Provincial Governments, the Government of India possessed no detailed information about the rules for the conduct of election in different parts of British India or the success attended by the elective system where it did exist. Accordingly, on 10th May, 1881 a circular was sent to all Provincial Governments.⁵

3. Ripon to Fergusson (Governor of Bombay), 8th July, 1880, I.S. 190/8 (I.S. for *Ripon papers catalogued in British Museum State Paper Room*).

4. Ripon to Hartington (Secretary of State for India), 26th January, 1881, I.S. 290/5, Ripon to Baring (Finance Member of Governor-General's Executive Council), 14th August, 1882, I.S. 290/8.

5. Circular of Home Dept of the Govt. of India to the Provincial Governments, No. 4-70/76, 10th May, 1881, *Parliamentary Papers*, 1883, vol. LI.

In response to this Home Department enquiry, replies from the provincial governments on the elective system in Municipalities reached the Government of India which revealed that while elections had nowhere proved eminently successful, they had never been a cause of disorder. But before the Government of India could give thorough consideration to those reports, the Finance Department had to renew the financial agreement with the provinces. This was an opportunity for the supreme government officials to think whether to give more impetus to the development of local self-government not only in urban areas but also in rural parts in India. A Resolution for the renewal of provincial agreements was drafted and was placed before Ripon who decided to seize the opportunity thus provided by the Finance Department under administrative pressure and give effect to what views he had formed up to this time, perhaps, earlier than might otherwise, have occurred. Ripon agreed with Hope's⁶ and Baring's⁷ notes about extending local self-government and after verbal discussion with Baring⁸ he included in the draft Resolution the principle of an "elective system" in appointing the non-official members of both Municipal and rural bodies. Thus, the Financial Resolution, embodying two paragraphs on the development of local self-government, was finally issued on 30th September, 1881.⁹ But this Resolution made no allusion to the "political implications"—i. e., to develop organs of local government as instruments of giving political education to Indians,—which was subsequently one of the key points of the fully determined final policy. It did not specify any particular way of extending the principle of election. It was, in Ripon's own words, "meant rather to elicit the opinions of Local [provincial] Governments".¹⁰ The Provincial Governments were asked to

6. Note by T C Hope on "Provincial Services Agreement", 13th August, 1881, Add. Mss. (Ripon papers catalogued in British Museum Manuscript Room) 43586

7. Note by Baring on "Provincial Settlement", 20th August, 1881, Add. Mss. 43586

8. Ripon to Baring, 14th August, 1882, I S. 290/8.

9. Financial Resolution of the Govt of India, 30th September, 1881, No. 3353, *Parliamentary Papers*, 1883, vol. LI.

10. Ripon's memorandum on 26th December, 1882 for Kimberly, Secretary of State for India, I S. 290/5.

consult their subordinate officers and then to submit their opinions on the question of extending elective principle.

Soon the issue was lifted out from the undergrowth of financial detail and came under the direct purview of the Home Department. Here Mackenzie, the Secretary to the department turned out to be Hope's counterpart. What these officials expressed, the Viceroy gave them the final shape and added force and vigour to those views. The final policy expressed in the Resolution of 18th May, 1882 embodied, for the greater part, the wording of the Viceroy himself.

Some provincial heads, for example Sir George Couper in North Western Provinces, C. A. Elliot in Assam, C. E. Bernard in British Burma and Sir John Morris in Central Provinces, although they did not deliberately take any part in the process of policy making, had a secondary influence. Their activity in their respective provinces in fostering municipal institutions seemed to the Viceroy as encouraging. In fact, a section of the British Indian officials was in favour of associating Indians in the administration, giving them power and responsibilities and making them fit to look after their own affairs. They were not motivated by any political aim; their efforts were simply to give relief from the minutes of local administration to subordinate officials. But the emphasis on the extension of self-government as an "instrument" of political education of Indians, to utilise "educated" Indians by affording them opportunities for devoting their energies in a non-official capacity was all Ripon's.

At the very beginning of the note which he prepared on 27th April, 1882, i. e., before the famous Resolution of 18th May, 1882, to explain to his colleagues what he wished to see done, Ripon said that he had distinctly decided to develop local self-government as a "policy of endeavouring to extend the principle of popular representation and to make a larger use of it as an instrument of political education of the Indians".¹¹ Then he proceeded to consider what measures were necessary "to remove the causes which check the growth of the elective system and to secure its fuller and more fruitful application."¹²

11. Ripon's note of 27th April, 1882, I S. 290/5

12. *Ibid.*

He wanted to refute the remarks of those officials who were of opinion that the results of the elective system in municipalities where it had been tried were unsatisfactory and that the people were indifferent by saying that, "we ought not to allow ourselves to be too much discouraged by the small or unsatisfactory results which have been so far reached or to regard them as certain indication of the indifference of the people to self-government, because we may fairly act against the failures which have been undoubtedly taken place in many instances the success which has been attained in others."¹³ This indicates that Ripon had made up his mind about the extension of the elective system. But he did not insist on adopting the principle of election immediately in all parts of the country. He wanted to make it clear that "it was the principle which his government desires to see ultimately adopted generally and which it wishes to establish now as widely as local circumstances will permit."¹⁴ Ripon was, therefore, the great advocate of the extension of the system of election in India "as an instrument of political and popular education". His views were given effect by a resolution embodying the policy for the reform of local self-government along with the extension of the elective system in British India issued from the Home Department of the Government of India on 18th May, 1882.¹⁵ This Resolution, subsequently, came to be accepted as one of the most important documents in the constitutional history of British India.

The policy of extending "elective principle" in the organs of local administration as referred to in the Financial Resolution of 30th September, 1881 and elaborated in the Home Department Resolution of 18th May, 1882 met with a mixed reception from the government officials. As the application of the principles of popular election was the main concern in the constitution of municipal or local bodies, there emerged various concepts of representation in the course of the discussion at various stages and at all levels of officialdom, i. e., from the Supreme Government down to the district officer of the different provinces

13. *Ibid*

14. *Ibid*

15. Resolution of the Govt of India, 18th May, 1882, *Parliamentary Papers*, 1883, (from now on p p. vol LI, pp. 25-32

In response to the Supreme Government's Financial Resolution of 30th September, 1881, the Government of Bombay, passed a Resolution on 25th March, 1882, where it proposed to extend elective system in ten city municipalities. As for the franchise Fergusson, the Governor thought it desirable that as far as possible all persons of respectability, character and means should possess a voice in selecting Municipal Commissioners. The franchise might, therefore, be not only pecuniary but also educational and professional and the privilege of a vote might be granted as well to graduates of any university or medical college and to pleaders, as to persons contributing directly to Government or municipal revenues.

Only two officers, Commissioner of the Central Division and the Collector of Poona district, attended to the question of the nature of representation. Both agreed that a property qualification should be the chief qualification for members; educational qualification only, without any stake in the country, would bring "hungry agitators [rather] than discrete supporters of municipal self-government." For electors the prescribed qualification was to be property or educational, together with a certain taxation test¹⁶ It appears, thus, that Fergusson was prepared for more liberal electoral qualifications than his subordinates.

Of the Bengal officials, the Magistrate of Burdwan proposed that men possessed of large landed interests should find a place on the Local Board; voters should be all cess-payers rated, for example about Rs. 50 per annum and upwards.¹⁷ The Commissioner of Burdwan division supported him but emphasised that large zamindars, who had management of their estates to their agents or to farmers should not be invited to sit on Local Boards; because their indolence and want of interest in public matters disqualify them for public duties¹⁸ One officer, the Collector of Dacca, held that there should be representatives of chief

¹⁶ P P 1883, vol LI, Appx

¹⁷ Note by the Magistrate of Burdwan, 14th December, 1881, *Bengal Municipal Proceedings*, 1882, vol 1838

¹⁸ Report of the Commissioner of Burdwan Division, 31st December, 1881, *Beng. Mun. Proc.* 1882 vol 1838.

¹⁹ Note by the Collector of Dacca, 5th January, 1882, *Beng. Mun. Proc.* 1882, vol. 1838.

religious sections, of chief trading or other class interests and of several local divisions of the district.¹⁹ But he was convinced that whatever the scheme the Government might adopt, its success would depend upon the tact and patience with which it would be worked out by executive officers of the district.

In the view of Sir Ashley Eden, the Lt. Governor of Bengal, elected members of rural bodies should have a substantial stake in the locality which would return them. For voters also he preferred a property qualification.²⁰ He remained silent about municipal election. He did not, however, sympathise with his district officers about class or caste representation.

The Lt Governor of the North-Western Provinces desired that members of rural boards should be chosen from the most intelligent and capable landowners of the district, for they constituted the class from whom most assistance was to be looked for in the administration of local public works and they would more properly represent the classes from whom the local votes were taken. But he left it open to the district officers to nominate persons other than landholders whose presence they thought to be desirable on other grounds.²¹ Thus although the Government of India did not advocate any particular theory of representation, some officials in provincial and local levels gave considerable thought to the question.

At the second stage, before the final Resolution was promulgated, Mackenzie's note of 29th November, 1881, which dealt with urban bodies only, contained that all kinds of municipal tax-payers should be entitled to vote in Municipal elections, but nothing was said about the qualifications of candidates.²² His second note of 25th April, 1882, dealt with only rural bodies in which he proposed that an income of Rs. 1,000 per annum from any source should be required for electors ; and candidates

20. Letter from the Govt. of Bengal to the Govt. of India, 8th April, 1882, *P.P.* 1883, vol LI.

21. Letter from the Govt. of N. W P to the Govt of India, 3rd November, 1881, *P.P.* 1883, vol LI.

22. Note by Mackenzie, 29th November, 1881 Add MSS. 435-76

should possess landed or house property within the locality under the authority of the local Board. He proposed high qualification for electors, because, he thought, this was the only way to attract respectable men as candidates in popular election

Ripon, the Viceroy, expressed the view that different methods of election should be tried in different places in order to test by practical experience what arrangements were best suited to the circumstances of different localities of the sub-continent. The May Resolution embodied the Viceroy's own words when it said,

"A variety of plans should be tried in order to a future comparison of results. The simple vote, the cumulative vote, election by wards or tract or by whole town, suffrage of more or less extended qualification, election by castes or occupations—these and other methods might all be tried. New methods, unthought of in Europe, may be found suitable in India."²³

But Ripon cautioned that whatever might be the scheme adopted, it should be "as consonant as possible to the feelings and habits of the people." In another place of the May Resolution, Mackenzie's ideas appear to have hit the mark as it was said that qualification of candidates of rural bodies should, at first, ordinarily be fairly high.²⁴ A still more general view was that the Government should utilise the growing number of western educated men.²⁵ Thus the provincial governments were left with considerable discretion to experiment with various theories and forms of representation.

This discretion was fully utilised by officials at the provincial and local levels. In examining their ideas in this context we also intend to discuss what, in the official view, would be the possible effects of the introduction of an elective system upon the communal and class feelings of Indian society.

The Punjab Government Resolution of 7th September, 1882 declared that representation should be the representation of the

23. Resolution of the Government of India, 18th May, 1881, para 14

24. *Ibid*, para 13.

25. *Ibid*, para. 6

existing organic groups of the people. The precise proposition was that in large towns and advanced districts it might be possible, following the English model, to fix upon a property or taxation qualification for voters and candidates. But in backward parts and in some exceptional places, arrangements might be less elaborate both in the manner of election and in qualifications. For instance, the district officer might consider various castes, tribes and trade guilds of the place, and decide how many electors each should be invited to appoint, accepting those who satisfied the conditions of capacity and interest in public affairs. Nothing specified was said about the qualifications for candidates.²⁶ Thus, there again discretion was left to the district officers to determine the nature of representation for his district.

Accordingly, various schemes were submitted by the officers to the Government. There were proposals for representations of interests, class, communities, tribes and so on. The deputy commissioner of Amritsar was tempted to introduce class representation but afterwards decided it advisable to adopt a system of representation of specific interests. In these he included not only property holders but also traders, government officers and heads of principal religious sections.²⁷ All other officers of Amritsar division held the same view that there should be no caste representation. The principal reason for this opinion was the existence of religious antagonism between the two principal section of the community—Hindus and Muslims. But they did not specifically state that any caste representation would increase the communal discord. The majority of the officers proposed property, rate-paying and household suffrage for urban committees and landownership for rural boards. Very few officials agreed to recommend educational franchise without any tax or property or income test.

But there were also other various proposals. Representation by caste was recommended for rural boards in Jhelum district ;²⁸

26. Resolution of the Govt of Punjab, 7th September, 1882, *Proc of the Finance Dept of the Govt of Punjab* 1883 vol 2016.

27. Report of the Commissioner, Amritsar Division, 8th January, 1883, *Proc. of the Finance Dept of the Govt of Punjab*, 1883, vol 2016.

28. Report of the Deputy Commissioner of Jhelum, 26th October, 1882, *Proc. of the Home Dept of the Govt. of Punjab*, 1883, vol 2604.

while representation by tribe was proposed for Peshawar division and a district in Hirsan. The main reason was that individual animosities ran very high in these places. Some recommended that to afford a fair voice to a minority, the district officer might be allowed to nominate a proportion of the members to rural boards, if necessary, to redress any great inequality. The Deputy Commissioner of Lahore thought that in the countryside if the election could start with village panchayats, all religious and ethnical considerations would have been fully met. He was also willing to reserve certain seats on the Lahore Municipality for shopkeepers, traders and educated persons who possessed limited incomes or property²⁹ Officers of the Punjab Province, therefore, responded to the Resolution of their Government heartily and put forward schemes deemed appropriate to their respective locality. From the variety of the proposals it appears that theirs were not a half-hearted attempt in this respect.

The North-Western Province Government circulars calling local officials to submit proposals for the elective system were not specific about the nature of representation to be considered. Thus full discretion was left to district officers. A majority of them proposed a property or income, or rate and revenue paying test, for electors in the countryside. Only a few were inclined to give electoral privileges to educated persons and government officers. The district officers of Rai-Bareilly and Cawnpur suggested representation by caste, because in open election, they feared, all classes of the society would not be evenly represented. A number of reports reflected the official sense of the bitter religious animosity between Hindus and Muslims. These were places like Rai-Bareilly, Moradabad, Kashipur, Etah, Muzaffarnagar, Bulandshahr etc., where under an elective system ill-feeling between the two communities would have the municipal business in deadlock unless the executive head of the district remained Chairman of the Committee³⁰

29. Report of the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, 2nd January, 1883, *Proc. of the Fin. dept. of the Govt. of Punjab, 1883*, vol. 2016

30. Reports of the district officers and the Commissioners of divisions of the North-Western Provinces reveal these sentiments. For details see various appendixes of the *Parliamentary Papers, 1883*, vol. L1.

For municipal electors all but two reports proposed such qualifications as householding, rate-payment, payment of licence-tax, income of a limited amount, government pension and in a few towns education, i e , graduation from any university. Some officers proposed matriculation as an electoral qualification. They recommended election by territorial divisions. The district officers of Bulandshahr and Muzaffarnagar again suggested limits on the number of seats to be held by members of a particular community, in proportion to their population proportion. For Bulandshahr it was even proposed that members of each class should vote for their representatives drawn from their own class only. None of the officers, however, proposed any distinction in franchise between the two communities. Thus the basic division of interests and feeling between Hindus and Muslims was reflected in the official reports which in order to avoid the possibility of danger arising from the introduction of an open elective system, brought forward the idea of "communal seats" or "communal representation".

But the Committee appointed by Lyall, the Lt. Governor of the North-Western Provinces, to consider the question and advise, discarded the idea of representation or voting by guilds, castes or sects which might foster rivalries and prejudices and recommended for municipalities election by wards or *muhallas*. Discretion on the franchise was left to the individual municipality subject to the subsequent approval by the government. These recommendations were accepted by Lyall. Thus, the Government of N W.P. ignored the suggestions of some district officers for communal representation and wished to remove ill-feeling on this account, aiming to bring together the representatives of the general community on the common ground of evil interests and local responsibility.³¹

The Bengal officers were left with discretion over the method of election and the qualifications of voters and candidates for municipalities. For rural boards the Lt. Governor of Bengal gave specific instructions that electors should be property-holders or direct tax-payers or that they should receive a certain income and be residents of the locality. As to the mode of election district

31 Resolution of the Govt of North-Western Province, 15th December, 1882, P.P. 1883, vol L1

officers were asked to consider schemes more consonant with native feeling, which they were by consultation to discover.

From the reports of the Bengal officials it was clear that in three out of nine divisions the opinion of the officials was that an open election would exclude Muslim representatives and the result would increase ill-feeling between Hindus and Muslims. The Commissioner of Chittagong recommended elections for four municipalities only but commented that even in those places an election would exclude Muslim members who were too poor to be likely to qualify for voting rights and thus result in a government of the majority (i.e., the Muslims) by members of the minority. There was also an impression among Muslims in general, the Commissioner of Chittagong said, that this policy of introducing election was another device of the Government to throw power and emoluments into the hands of the Hindus. As this feeling was more prominent among Muslims of the countryside, the Commissioner did not recommend election for rural boards.³²

The officials of Patna were aware of religious antagonism between the two communities. The Commissioner of the division proposed rate-paying as a franchise qualification and election by wards in municipalities, and strongly recommended that the district officers should remain as chairman for the time. But the district officer of Darbhanga in the same division thought it would be unsafe to introduce election in the municipality because of strong party feeling between the Muslims, well-organised though a minority, and the Hindus.³³

Of all the Bengal officials, the Commissioner of the Presidency division was the most critical of the introduction of the elective principle. He argued that the development of democratic principles was impossible in a society which was subject to the extreme tyranny of caste. Secondly, he argued, election in the countryside would exclude Muslims and consequently their interests

32 Report of the Commissioner of Chittagong Division, 18th September, 1882, *Bengal Mun Proc*, 1883, vol 2028

33. Report of the Commr. of Patna Division, 9th September, 1882, *Bengal Mun Proc.*, 1883, vol. 2028.

would be neglected.³⁴ He did not propose any other system of representation, which indicates that he preferred nomination.

Those officials who were in favour not of communal or class representation, but of geographical representation by wards, suggested such franchise qualifications as house-owning, payment of any direct tax either to municipality or to government, property, income and also education. In the countryside they thought that election would work well by circle (i. e., a number of villages grouped according to contiguity, shared economic life and social interrelationship) and the franchise should be mainly by property or income or payment of land revenue. Licence-taxpayers or pensioned government servants were included in some places. But the principal idea was that both in urban or rural areas, representation should be of those who contributed to the funds which the Committees or Boards would control. This was the main reason for not emphasising an educational qualification, especially in country districts

The Bombay officials were left without any guidance from their government over what theory of representation they should follow. The officials also submitted varied reports in reply. Election by caste was suggested by a number of them. In the view of the Collector of Satara district under an open election some restrictions to enable each caste to send representatives to any public body were essential; otherwise the Brahmins, who hate the people of any other caste, would predominate and the interests of all other castes would be utterly neglected.³⁵ The Assistant Collector of Ratnagiri, although very enthusiastic about election, proposed representation by caste or class, especially in municipalities.³⁶ The Commissioner of Sind proposed election by wards in municipalities but by caste and occupation in the countryside.³⁷ Only the Commissioner of the Northern division

³⁴ Report of the Commr of Presidency Division, 16th October, 1882, *Bengal Mun. Proc.*, 1883, vol 2028

³⁵ Report from the Collector of Satara to the Govt. of Bômbay, 13th July, 1882, *P.P.* 1883, Vol. LI, Appx

³⁶ Report from the Assistant Collector of Ratnagiri to the Govt of Bombay, 18th, 1882, *P.P.* 1883, Vol LI, Appx

³⁷ Report from the Commissioner of Sind to the Govt. of Bombay, 15th July, 1882, *P.P.* 1883, Vol LI, Appx

suggested equal representation for all sections of the community.³⁸ The Collector of Surat could not decide whether election should be by wards or by "sects"—Hindus, Muslims, Parsees etc., electing in proportion to their numbers.³⁹ The remainder of the officials, those who were favourable to the principle, recommended mainly the payment of direct taxes and to some extent property and education as qualifications for municipal electors, and representation of landowners and cultivators, as contributors to the local funds, in rural areas.

The Government of Bombay thought it desirable that in municipalities the franchise should be extended to those who by position and education were qualified to exercise it judiciously and whose contributions towards the municipal revenues were sufficiently large to justify their having a voice in the administration of those funds. Thus, all urban residents who were educated (i. e., holding a University degree), and Government servants and pensioners, licence-taxpayers and contributors to municipal or Imperial funds were to be entitled to vote in a municipal election. In Bombay city itself, they were already so qualified. It is significant to note that the Bombay Government was willing to allow women to vote if, otherwise, properly qualified. As to the method of election, it was laid down that election should be generally by wards. But in special cases and when exceptional circumstances rendered the adoption of such course advisable, the different sections of the community, as for instance the Christians, the Muslims, the Parsees and the Hindus, might be permitted to return their own representatives.

Thus, the Bombay Government, unlike the Government of North-Western Provinces, gave consideration to the suggestions of its district officers for separate electorates for different sections of the community and left the decision to the district officers in the light of the local circumstances. But for rural areas the position was the reverse. There election was to be by groups of villages without any consideration of their ethnical division and only

38. Report from the Commissioner of the Northern Division to the Govt. of Bombay, 21st June, 1882, *P.P.* 1883, Vol. LI, Appx.

39. Report from the Collector of Surat to the Govt. of Bombay, 30th June, 1882, *P.P.* 1883, Vol. LI, Appx.

pecuniary qualifications, i. e., holding or occupying property and paying land revenue, were recommended for the franchise.

As to the qualifications for members or candidates for either urban or rural bodies, the officials generally held that they should be higher than those of elector—whether income or property or rate-paying. No official recommended candidature by any educated person, especially in rural areas, without any property stake in the locality for which they were standing. Otherwise, they argued, the elected members would not take adequate interest in the expenditure of the funds under their control. Another condition was advanced by a majority of the officials, namely, that criminally convicted persons should not be allowed to contest any election. Very few officials, especially in the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab, considered that the qualifications for candidates should not be solely pecuniary, because there were some men of respectable families reputed for their honesty, prudence and public spirit who would be disqualified from standing for election by a high pecuniary qualification; consequently their valuable services would be lost. To enable such persons to stand for election they recommended that men of respectability and influence though with small income or property, should be allowed to contest elections.

Of all the Governments, only Bombay considered that in municipalities the qualifications for both candidates and voters should be the same. In rural areas it would not allow any educational qualification either for members or for voters, but in municipalities the Government would allow men of education, of the professions as well as men of income or property to be returned as members of Committees. A higher qualification was prescribed for rural board candidates. The Government of North-Western Provinces left the discretion of deciding the qualifications for voters and candidates to the municipalities themselves.

Thus official ideas of the character of representation and of representatives under an elective system, were very mixed. Caste, community, property, income, rate-payment, education, professional and other considerations were put forward. Caste considerations were prominently reflected in the Bombay and Bengal officials reports. They thought that without any restriction or discretionary power of the executive officer, members of higher

and influential castes would predominate in boards or committees and, consequently, the interests of lower castes would be neglected. Similar fears were expressed about the effects of an elective system which paid no regard to communal identity and to the differences in wealth between members of different communities. Some officials including the Commissioners of Chittagong and the Presidency divisions in Bengal and a Collector in Bombay held that as Muslims were backward in Western education and were not, generally speaking as wealthy and influential as Hindus, under any elective system they would not be successful in returning candidates in proportion to their total number as a community. Some officials suggested empowering the district officer to nominate a proportion of the members of any committee or board so that any grievances might be redressed.

Thus the official view was that under any elective system sufficient safeguards were to be provided to protect the interests of the lower classes of the society and the minorities, for instance, Muslims, where there were basic differences of interest.

It should also be pointed out that although one of the aims of the supreme Government of India in extending the system of local self-government was to utilise the western educated classes, most officials did not consider that only education without any property or income test would render persons competent to serve as members of the Boards or Committees, especially in rural areas. The Governor of Bombay was ready to allow educated persons seats in municipal committees but for rural boards he emphasised that only persons holding or occupying land or other property should be entitled to contest in election. Thus it is evident that the official idea at the provincial and district level was to give power and responsibility generally to men of influence, wealth and prestige who were reputed to be natural leaders of the community. Such men were preferred to the Western educated class who understood the principle of local self-government no doubt but who did not command the respect of the masses or possess sufficient wealth property to afford the leisure for public service. This class was to be given some importance only in urban areas.

REVIEW

THE ZIRIDS OF GRANADA by Andrew Handler, pp. 208+ X
University of Miami Press, Coral Gables, Florida, 1974.

The 'Arab General Mūsā b. Nusayr assisted by his lieutenant Berber Tāriq b. Zayyād conquered Spain in 712 A D and the Umayyad power reached its zenith in the West as well as in the East. The Berbers had their grudge against the Arabs as they did not have their full share in the acquired land and position in Spain. They contributed their bit to the rise and fall of the Umayyads in Spain. On the break up of the Umayyad empire in Spain like the Arabs, neo-Muslims and the Slavs, the Berbers led by the Zirids had their own share in the ransack and carved out their own principality at Granada. The Banū Zīrī ruled for about 78 years (1012-1090), three of their important kings being Zāwī, Ḥabbus and Bādīs and one Jewish prime minister Samuel Ha-Levi ben Nagdela (Ismā'īl b. Naghzalah).

Andrew Handler's book '*The Zirids of Granada*' is a well-written and documented work, the first of its kind in English, on a petty dynasty of the later period of the Muslim rule in Spain. About fifty years back Prieto Y Vives has written on the petty dynasties in Spain under the title '*Los Reyes de Taifas*' in Spanish. The binding of Andrew's book is nice and the get-up of the work is attractive. The presentation is charming and the language is lucid justifying the outer-show of the book. It deals with the political and administrative history of the Banū Zīrī of Granada (1012-1090) before the final transfer of power from the hands of the Spanish Muslims to those of the North Africans under Yūsuf b. Tāshufīn and the formation of Granada along with other principalities of Andalusia (southern Muslim part of Spain) a part of the North African empire of al-Murābitīn in 1090 A. D.

The rise of the Ṣanhājah Berbers against the Zanata Berbers in North Africa and of the Zirids political supremacy in Granada owe their origin to the struggle for domination in Mauritania (North-West Ifriqiyah) between the Fatimids of Egypt and Umayyads of Spain. In 360/971 the Ṣanhājah Berber chief Zīrī

b. Manad championing the cause of the Fatimids in Ifriqiyah was killed near Tahart by the Hamduni and Maghrawi Berbers under the patronage of the Umayyads and his head was displayed in Cordova. The Berbers' desire for political and military independence was clearly reflected, as their revolt against the Umayyad authority of Cordova did in the past, in the election of Sulaymān b. al-Ḥakam b. Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Rahmān III al-Nāsir with the honorific title of *al-Musta'in bi'llah* as their caliph in Rabī' I, 400/Nov. 1009. They wrested military power from the Slavs and the Arabs and rose to prominence.

The *Kitāb al-Tibyān* of 'Abd Allāh published by E. Levi-Provençal and the *Diwān* of the Jewish poet Ismā'īl b. Naghzalāh (Nagdela) throw new light on the political, military and administrative history of the Banū Zīrī of Granada and *La Berbèrie Orientale sous les Zirides* published in two volumes by H. R. Idris gives a detailed historical, social and religious back-ground account of the Zirids mainly during their rise to power in North Africa.

Of the *Mulūk al-Tawā'if* (Petty dynasties) the Berber Banū Zīrī of Granada and the 'Arab Banū 'Abbās of Seville were the leading dynasties in the 11th century Muslim Spain and represent the flourishing condition of the Jewish and 'Arab culture respectively. The prosperity of the Jews in the Zīrid Granada and Lucena formed the integral part of the Zirids' history in Spain.

Quoting from my book *'Some Aspects of the Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Muslim Spain'* Leiden 1965 (p.45) Mr. Andrew Handler writes on page 151 that "in the Caliphate administration of Umayyad Cordova only Arabs and Berbers were invested with the highest administrative authority, while the neo-Muslims and *Dhimmis* generally held lower posts" and asserts that the Zirids did not hesitate to appoint a Jew, namely Ismā'īl b. Naghzalāh on having ten years' experience in administration to the highest administrative post of *Wazārat*. Thereby he has indirectly undermined the tolerant policy of the Umayyads in Spain. Except the posts of *Khilāfat* and *Qadā'* high posts were opened for the capable and loyal Muslims and *Dhimmis* alike. Thus if the Zirids of Granada could boast of the achievements of the Naghzala (Ismā'īl and his son Yūsuf) the Umayyads of Cordova gave proof of their tolerance and patronage by appointing men

like Hasday b. Shaprut to high administrative posts as finance minister and ambassador. The author adds "Their religious tolerance, however, one of the pillars of Zīrid Granada, overlooked the traditional prohibition which prevented a non-Muslim from exercising authority over Muslims."

In the chapter on the organization of Zīrid Granada the author has devoted a number of pages to the ambitious plan of Ismā'īl b. Naghzalah for the establishment of Solomon's rule in Granada having no direct bearing on the Zīrid organization. This chapter spread over 16 pages could have been reduced to three to four pages dealing mainly with the social, religious, economic and administrative affairs under the Zīrids of Granada. Although 'Abd Allāh's *Kitāb al-Tibyān* throws little light on these aspects of life except the military and political achievements of the Zīrids yet the contemporary general histories of the 'Arabs and the biographical literatures dealing with the lives of merchants, poets and literateurs reveal the wide socio-economic activities of the Spaniards in the 11th century and the Zīrids of Granada can not be an exception. From the numismatic evidence it is clear that Granada had commercial relations with Saragossa, Malaga, Almeria, Seville and Ifriqiyah. A separate chapter on the Banū Zīrī's relation with the neighbouring powers especially the Christians was quite essential to enhance the importance of the work. Further without a chapter on intellectual activities and another on Arts and architecture the book remains incomplete. In short, the author has mainly written on the political history of the Zīrids and added a chapter on their civil and military organizations and economic activities.

The genealogical table given on page 6 without dates does not serve its required purpose. There are some factual and printing mistakes although not of very serious nature. The dates given by the authors in their literary works which he consulted have not been always verified by Andrew. Foot notes have not been properly arranged.

'ARAB MUSLIM ADMINISTRATION (622-1258) by S. M. Imamudin, Karachi, 1976. pp. VI+162+3 maps, Price-Rs. 25.00 (25 Shillings)

After the publication of the pioneer work, *Arab Administration* by S. A. Q. Husaini need was felt for undertaking a detailed study of the subject. The author of the work under review, who wrote as many as five books on Muslim Spain, two books on the political history of the Muslims, one book on the modern history of Middle East and North Africa and has been teaching in the Dacca University for about 25 years, could fulfil this need. But instead of going into details of the subject he has chosen to write a brief account and it has to be said to his credit that although brief he has left nothing of any significance out of account. Putting together in a single volume the administrative accounts of the three Caliphates i.e., the Abbasids of Baghdad, Umayyads of Spain and Fatimides of Egypt, among whom the Muslim world was divided at a time—he has offered an opportunity to compare and contrast and find out the peculiarities of the administrative system of the three Caliphates.

The first chapter has been devoted to the discussion of some source materials. These materials are scattered in the various Arabic works dealing mainly with political history, geography, biographies, judicial and police affairs *hisbah* etc. This discussion will help those who may intend to undertake further study on the subject.

The second chapter deals with the administrative system under the Prophet Muhammad and the pious Caliphs. Since the basic foundations of all the legal and administrative institutions of Islamic state were laid down in this period, a separate chapter or an independent section at least could exclusively be devoted to the discussion of the administrative system as evolved by the Prophet. The pre-Islamic institutions deserve more attention as well. The *Mala'*, council of the elders, had been a particular institution of the city state of Mecca. Mention of *al-Mala'*, in the course of discussion of the 'Arab tribal administration may create confusion, (p. 15). In a book on administration such

statements as "Even married women were given freely to guests and strangers. As pastime the nobles often tied women to the tails of a galloping horse crushing them to death" (p. 17), without citing the authority, appear incongruous. In any way such description of women's position of a society wherein women like Khadija and Hinda commanded so much respect and influence, may be outcome of zealous attempts of some authors to paint a darker picture of the so-called dark ages. The tribal solidarity and tribal humanism were two sterling qualities of the Arab Bedouins. In a sense the greatest innovation of Islam the brotherhood of the Muslim—is no innovation at all. The roots of the idea of Islamic brotherhood have to be traced back in the tribal humanism. In a modified and extended form Islam made it all-embracing and universal. The most revolutionary change brought in it by Islam was introduction of the religion in place of blood as the basis of the solidarity and brotherhood.

Important administrative institutions like central secretariate, department of justice, police etc., and the framework of provincial administration, and the five sources of revenue viz *al-Ghanima*, *al-Zakāt*, *al-Ṣadaqah*, *al-Jizyah*, *al-Rharāj* and *al-Fayy'*—all these came into being in their rudimentary forms during the Prophet's lifetime. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb added to the list of taxes *al-Ushur* (tithes) imposed on the merchandise. 'Umar also founded a central treasury at Madīnah and its branches in the provinces. But the greatest innovation of 'Umar was the establishment of the *Diwān* (Finance Department)

The *Diwān* of 'Umar has received much applause from many authors. "This was the first attempt made in the history of the world for the state to take upon itself the collective responsibility for the supply of food and clothing to the entire population" (p 40) But did Islam authorise the state to take upon itself this responsibility? When a state takes upon itself this responsibility it imposes itself upon the people, it tightens its grip over them and as a consequence fosters twin evils of bureaucracy and regimentation. In fact 'Umar's system regimented all the Arabs and turned the entire Arab nation into a sort of garrison. This extreme of regimentation broke loose as soon as the strong man, 'Umar breathed his last.

Umar's *Dīwān* could not work for long for two other practical reasons. First, it combined military and civil pensions into one and secondly, with ever-expanding territories and ever-increasing number of Muslims the list of pension-holders could not be going on extended indefinitely.

Umar's *Dīwān* had also been indirectly responsible for showing the seed of discontent among the 'Arab Bedouins whose collective might led to the rapid expansion of the domain of Islam. In accordance with the principle as laid down by the Prophet four-fifths of the movable as well as immovable property of the conquered territories ought to be divided among the soldiers actually participating in the conquests. If division of lands had not been practical, the revenues collected therefrom have to be distributed among the fighters concerned. But Umar instead of distributing it put this land-revenue in the public treasury and gave the fighters a fixed amount of pension. Moreover, he forbade the Arabs to acquire land in the conquered territories by purchase or any other means. After Umar's death this ban on acquisition of lands vanished in the thin air and the actual conquerors, the Bedouins of the deserts found to their utter astonishment how the elite of the Arabs, the members of the Quraysh tribe began to grab lands in the conquered provinces. There is nothing to be surprised if this discontent Bedouin of the deserts joined hands with the discriminated non-Arab Muslims to overthrow the weak regime of Uthmān.

Chapter III is divided into two sections, (I) Umayyads and (II) Abbasids.

The central administrative departments under the Umayyads were *Dīwān al-Kharāj*, *Dīwān al-Rasā'il*, *Dīwān al-Khatam*, *Dīwān al-Qadā*, *Dīwān al-Shurtah*, *Dīwān al-Barīd*, *Dīwān al-Jund*. Besides these departments notice had been taken also of fiscal reforms, coinage, provincial administration and public works.

Al-Kharāj, the land revenue, had been the most intricate problem of the Umayyad administration. *Al-Kharāj* was a land-tax and according to the Islamic principle it had to be collected only from the non-Muslim. In violation of this principle the Umayyads imposed this tax on the Muslims. Provision for exemption from *Jizyah* (poll-tax) and *Kharāj* (land-tax) acted

as material incentive to the people of the conquered territories to embrace Islam in large numbers. Moreover, since almost all the newly converted Muslims were non-Arabs, the imposition of such taxes as *al-Kharāj* and *Jizyah* on them might induce them to think in terms of discrimination. The inevitable outcome of this policy was the widespread resentment among the non-Arab Muslims. In order to re-establish the original Islamic principle and put the non-Arab Muslims on equal footing with the Arab Muslims 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Azīz decreed that Muslim whether Arab or non-Arab, should pay only the *Zakāt*. As a consequence, the number of Muslims increased and revenue earning decreased. To a complaint made by an Egyptian official that conversion was seriously affecting the treasury 'Umar II said, "God sent his Prophet as a missionary, not as a tax-collector" (p. 53). 'Umar II's policy cost him his life and when his successors reimposed *al-Kharāj* on non-Arab Muslims in *Khurāsān* it proved fatal to the Umayyad rule. It was too much to deprive them of their rights as Muslims after that right had been restored to them.

In section II of the Chapter III central and provincial administration of the Abbasids has been discussed. *Wazārat* was a new institution of Persian origin, introduced by the Abbasid Caliph al-Saffāh. There developed in course of time two types of *Wazīr*—*Wazīr Tafwīḍ*, minister with unlimited authority and *Wazīr Tanfīdh*, minister with limited power to execute only the orders of the Caliph.

The number of departments or boards went on increasing and nine boards were functioning at the Capital of Abbasid Caliphate. They were (1) *Diwān al-Kharāj*, (2) *Diwān al-Rasā'il* or *Diwān al-khatam* or *Diwān al-Tawqī* (3) *Diwān al-Zimam*, (4) *Diwān al-Nazar fil Mazālim*, (5) *Diwān al-Quḍāt*, (6) *Diwān al-Shurtah*, (7) *Diwān al-Hisbah*, (8) *Diwān al-Barīd*, (9) *Diwān al-Jaysh* (*Jund*).

The army organisation has been discussed satisfactorily but as regards Muslim navy one is left with a keen desire for more information. Considerable space has been devoted to the discussion of public works of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Chapter IV deals with the administration of the Umayyads in Spain. This chapter is a revised edition of the chapter on administration of *A Political History of Muslim Spain*, by the author.

The Umayyad rulers of Spain used to call them *Amirs* till 929 A D the year the Umayyad *Amir* 'Abd al-Rahmān III assumed the title of *Khalifah*. While the independent *Amir* or *Khalifah* was the supreme head of the government the actual administration of the country was run by his *wazirs* (ministers) Each *Wazir* was in charge of a department. There were four principal departments viz Finance, Justice, Foreign affairs and War. *Wazir* was neither a representative (*Nā'ib*) of a Caliph nor was he a chief minister as the word *wazir* denoted in the Abbasid East. He approached the *Khalifah* through the prime Minister, known as *Hāyib* in Umayyad Spain. *Al-Khuttah* was another important administrative machinery. Its function was to look into all state affairs and to control all income and expenditure The provincial administration, military and naval organisation and the public works of the Umayyad rulers of Spain are dealt with

Chapter V is devoted to the Fatimid administration of Egypt. In this Chapter the nature and conception of the Fatimid Caliphate have been first discussed. The conception of the Fatimid Caliphate is quite different from that of the *Sunni* Caliphates of Baghdad and Cordova While the *Sunnis* believed in the Caliphate where people had rights to elect and choose their own head of the state, the *Shi'as* believed in divinely appointed *Imām*. The *Imāmyahs* maintain that the head of a Muslim state or community must be a descendent of Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fātimah.

To run the administration the Fatimid Caliph established an assembly called *da'wāt* consisting of several *arkān* (departments) The officials at the capital were divided into four classes.

The *wazir* was chief of all officials and he came sometimes from the "man of the sword" and at other times from "men of pen". The office next to the *Wazarat* was called *Wasāṭat* having lesser rights than the *Wazarat*. Next to the *Wazir* was *Ṣāhib al-Bāb* (head of the gate) who was sometimes called also as *Wazir aṣghar* or *Wazir adnā* *Al-Qā'id* (Commander-in-Chief) was leader of the army and responsible for the protection of the Caliph's palace. The Fatimid Caliph had built up a strong navy. Its brief account given here again whets the desire for more information

The four other officials at the Fatimid capital were *Ṣāhib al-Mizallh* (bearer of swords, lances and umbrella), *rikābiyah* (bearer of arms) and *Wālis* (governors of Cairo and Fustāt)

The *Dā'i al-Du'āt* was the chief propagandist of the Fatimid doctrine and he used to preside over the assemblies in the *Dār al-'Ilm*, Library cum University. The departments of justice, *Ḥisbah*, Police, *Insha*, *Kharāj* and provincial administration have been discussed.

The bibliography is exhaustive but omission of two modern works namely, *Cambridge History of Islam* and Von Grunebaum's *Classical Islam* may be made up in the next edition.

The students of Islamic History will undoubtedly derive much benefit by reading the book and the readers of history in general can hardly afford to ignore it

P. I S. M. Rahman

INDEX INDO-ASIATICUS 30 : 1975, pp IV+48 ; published by G. Chaudhury, Agartala, Tripura State, 1975.

In recent times, bibliographical literature on Asiatic studies is rapidly growing in volume not only in America and Europe, but also in other parts of the world including India. It shows scholarly interest in the history and archaeology of Asia. *Bibliography of Asian Studies* which eventually takes the shape of *Cumulative Bibliography* (Association for Asian Studies, Ann Arbor, Michigan), *Bibliography of Indian Archaeology* (Leiden), *Index Islamicus* and *Bibliography of Islamic Arts* (London) are such significant series or volumes as need respectful mention. The thin volume under notice is a welcome addition to this literature. This particular number of the series is presented to the Mexico Session of the International Congress of the Orientalists held from 3rd August, 1976 to 8th August, 1976, when for the first time scholars pursuing Asian and North African studies met in a Latin American country. "This is also a matter of special importance for India, for Indo-Mexican relations are sought to be traced to remotest times" and as such it will have given the researchers "opportunities to study directly the great heritage of Mexican Culture and Civilization in order to examine its link with that of Asian and specially of Indian Cultures and Civilizations." The motivations which underlie these remarks are cultural, not perhaps political.

Starting with a list of periodicals, festschrift volumes and congress proceedings, the present bibliographical volume contains titles of papers directly bearing on Asia, particularly India. Some of the journals and festschrifts from which articles have been selected, have international reputation. Thus, we may mention *Annals of the Bhandarkar Research Institute*, Poona : 54/1974, *Journal of Indian History*, Trivandrum : 1973, Golden Jubilee Volume, *Artibus Asiae*, Ascona : 36/1974, *Arts Asiatiques*, Paris : 26-27/1973, *Journal Asiatique*, Paris : 262 (1/2) : 1974, *Bengal Past and Present*, Calcutta , 93(1), 1974, *Indian Historical Records Commission*, Delhi . 1974 and *Epigraphia Indica : Ar. Pers. Suppl.*, New Delhi . 1970. Bangladesh is represented by *Journal of Varendra*

Research Society and Museum, Rajshahi : 2/1973. One may reasonably regret the absence of the journals, published by the Asiatic Societies of Bangladesh, India and Great Britain.

The papers listed in the volume deal with a wide variety of Indological or Asiatic subjects ranging from the prehistoric period to recent times. Brief annotations if supplied in incomplete sentences under each entry would have been extremely useful for the scholars ; but this principle does not seem to have been conceived of by the Editorial Advisory Committee having members from India and Bangladesh.

M. R. Tarafdar

TRANSLITERATION OF THE SANSKRIT, ARABIC AND ALLIED ALPHABETS

In order that contributors to Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh may adopt a uniform system of the diacritical marks in translitering non-European alphabets the following table of signs, approved by the International Congress of Orientalists and used in most countries of the world, is published as a general guide. Manuscripts offered for publication by the Society should be prepared in close and uniform approximation of this table.

I.
SANSKRIT AND ALLIED ALPHABETS.

अ a	ओ o	ट t	ब b
आ ā	औ au	ठ th	भ bh
इ i	क k	ड ḍ	म m
ई ī	ख kh	ढ ḍh	य y
उ u	ग g	ण ṇ	र r
ऊ ū	घ gh	त t	ल l
ऋ ṛ	ङ ṅ	थ th	व v
ॠ ṝ	च c	द d	श ś
ऌ ḷ	छ ch	ध dh	ष ṣ
ॡ ḹ	ज j	न n	स s
ए e	झ jh	प p	ह h
ऐ ai	ञ ñ	फ ph	ळ ḷ

˙ (Anusvāra) m	ṣ (Avagraha) ’
˘ (Anunāsika) ṁ	Udātta ˆ
: (Visarga) ḥ	Sevrita ˆ
× (Jihvāmūlīya) ḥ	Anudātta ˆ
⌘ (Upadhmanīya) ḥ	

II.

ARABIC AND ALLIED ALPHABETS.

ا at beginning of word omit;	ك k	ا a
elsewhere <u>ـ</u> or <u>و</u>	ل l	ي i
ب b	س s	م m
ت t	ش . s or <u>sh</u>	ن n
ث . t or <u>th</u>	ص . s or s	و . . w or v
ج . j or <u>dj</u>	ض d, <u>dz</u> , or z	ه h
ح h	ط t	ي ai
خ . h or <u>kh</u>	ظ z	و au
د d	ع <u>ـ</u>	wasla ' <u>ـ</u>
ذ . d or <u>dh</u>	ع . q or <u>gh</u>	VOWELS. hamza <u>ـ</u> or <u>و</u>
ر r	ف f	<u>ـ</u> a
ز z	ق q	<u>ـ</u> i
		letter not pronounced . . . <u>ـ</u>

DIPHTHONGS.

VOWELS.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS.

PERSIAN, HINDI, AND PASHTŪ	TURKISH ONLY	HINDI AND PASHTŪ.	PASHTŪ ONLY.
پ p	ک when pronounced as g k	ت or پ . t	خ ts
چ . c or <u>ch</u>		ڄ or چ . . d	ر g
ژ . z or <u>zh</u>		ڙ or ړ . . . ?	ښ n
گ g	گ ñ		ښ ksh

III.

BENGALI ALPHABET

অ . . . a	ক . . . k	ঠ . . . th	ব . . . b
আ . . . ā	খ . . . kh	ড . . . d	ভ . . . bh
ই . . . i	গ . . . g	ঢ . . . dh	ম . . . m
ঈ . . . ī	ঘ . . . gh	ণ . . . ṇ	য . . . y
উ . . . u	ঙ . . . ṅ	ত . . . t	র . . . r
ঊ . . . ū	চ . . . ch	থ . . . th	ল . . . l
ঋ . . . r̥	ছ . . . chh	দ . . . d	ব . . . v
এ . . . e	জ . . . j	ধ . . . dh̄	শ . . . ś
ঐ . . . ai	ঝ . . . jh	ন . . . n	ষ . . . ṣ
ও . . . o	ঞ . . . ñ	প . . . p	স . . . s
ঔ . . . au	ট . . . ṭ	ফ . . . ph	হ . . . h
			ক্ষ . . . ks

ঐ . . . ā	ঐ . . . e
ঐ . . . ī	ঐ . . . h
ঐ . . . ī	ঐ . . . m
ঐ . . . u	ঐ . . . ai
ঐ . . . ū	ঐ . . . o
ঐ . . . r	ঐ . . . au

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EPIGRAPHIC AND NUMISMATIC NOTES BEARING ON THE HISTORY OF PRE-MUGHAL BENGAL

M R TARAFDAR

What follows is miscellaneous notes on a very limited amount of archaeological materials throwing light on some aspects of the history of medieval Bengal

I

The Bihar Sharif inscription¹ dating from the reign of Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq records that Malik Ibrāhīm Bayyū, the Governor of Bihar who is identical with Malik Vayā of the Vipula or Rajgir Sanskrit inscription also styling him the Governor of Magadha², died on the 13th Dhi'l Hājja, 753 A. H or 20th January, 1353 A. D. Buchanan-Hamilton, on the basis of the Pandua Manuscript, states that Shams al-Dīn Ilyās Shāh "built a great palace, and made war on Ibrāhīm, Governor of Bihar on the part of Fīrūz"³ This Ibrāhīm is perhaps identical with Malik Ibrāhīm Bayyū mentioned in the epigraphic records cited above. Some scholars have argued that Ilyās Shāh's attack on Bihar was the immediate cause of Fīrūz Tughluq's first expedition against Bengal⁴ But this attack was not a phenomenon isolated from similar other political activities of the Bengal Sultān who was

1. Z. A. Desai 'Arabic and Persian Inscriptions from the Indian Museum', *Epigraphia Indica (E. I.)*, Arabic and Persian Supplement, 1955-56, pp-6-7, pl. II (a), Qeyamuddin Ahmad. *Corpus of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions of Bihar*, Patna, 1973, p. 35, pl 6 (a).
2. *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* 1919, (J. B. O. R. S.) pp. 331-343 and Z. A. Desai, *op. cit* p. 7.
3. Montgomery Martin *The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics*, Vol II, London, 1838, p. 616 and Desai, *op cit* p 7
4. *Ibid*, p. 8, A. M Choudhury 'New Light on Sultān Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq's First Invasion of Bengal', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan (J.A.S.P.)*, Vol. , VIII, 1963, No. 1, p 54.

consistently following a policy of territorial expansion adversely affecting the kingdom of Delhi. Ilyās Shah's conquest of Tīrhut and control over Champaran, Gorakhpur, Bahraich and Benares,⁵ must have provoked the Sultān of Delhi, for these regions were previously under the Tughluq rulers. The Bengal Sultān was trying to consolidate his hold on the trans-Gangetic region with a view to guarding effectively the western approaches to Bengal.⁶ His attack on Bihar⁷ seems to be a part of this calculated policy to which Fīrūz Tughluq reacted by attacking Bengal.

II

The fragmentary Ghazipur inscription bearing the title and name of Iqrār Khān, who was Governor over several places in succession under the Ilyās Shāhī ruler Bārbak Shāh,⁸ shows that Ghazipur on the border of Uttar Pradesh formed an integral part of Bengal. Thus a westward expansion of the kingdom is

5. *History of Bengal* (ed J N. Sarkar), Vol. II, Dacca, 1948, pp. 104-105, M. R. Tarafdar. *Husain Shahi Bengal A Socio-Political Study*, Dacca, 1965, p. 8 where the *Bayād* of Mullāh Taqīya has been cited.
6. *Ibid.*, pp 7-9, M. R. Tarafdar 'Note on the Fort of Ekdala' *Abdul Karim Sahitya-Visarad Commemoration Volume*, (Ed Muhammad Enamul Haq), Dacca, 1972, pp. 152-153 Fīrūz Shāh's proclamation to the people of Bengal explicitly refers to Ilyās Shāh's "oppression and highhandedness upon the people of the territory of Lakhnauti and Tīrhut . . .", *J A S. B.*, 1923, p. 279, also A. M. Choudhury *op. cit.*, p. 51.
7. Z A. Desai cites the *Sīrat-i-Fīrūz Shāhī* in order to show that Dā'ūd Khān was a son of Malik Ibrāhīm Bayyū According to the Bihar Sharif inscription dated in 765 A. H /1363 A. D, this Dā'ūd Khān was also the Governor of Bihar, perhaps in succession to his deceased father, *op cit.* p 8. I have noticed in *Mawlānā Dā'ūd's Chandān* a clear reference to Malik Bayān (Malik Ibrāhīm Bayyū) and his son Malik Mubārak *Chandān*, ed. Mataprasad Gupta, Agra, 1967, text, p 15, cf also Paramesvari Lal Gupta's edition, Bombay, Delhi, 1964, p 84. It seems clear that Malik Mubārak who was a son of Malik Bayyū, was acting as Governor of Dalmau when the *Chandān* was being composed, i. e. in 781 A. H /1379.
8. Y. K. Bukhari 'Inscriptions from the State Museum, Lucknow. *E I*, Arab and Pers suppl 1955-56; pp. 47-48; pl. XII (b). As a portion in the beginning and several words at the end of the epigraph have disappeared, its date and also the name of the ruler cannot

indicated by the epigraphic record under reference ; but it is not known how the place was occupied Bārbak Shāh seems to have taken advantage of the Lūdī-Sharqī conflict to expand his kingdom presumably at the cost of the Sharqī power. He brought the entire region of Tīrhut under his political control reviving the old administrative divisions introduced by Ilyās Shāh.⁹ If it is proved beyond doubt that the Bengal ruler had administrative jurisdiction over Ghazipur, it may be reasonably said that he had exercised effective control over the entire region from Tīrhut to the border of modern Uttar Pradesh, and in that case Kharid, Saran, Azamgarh and also Bhagalpur and Munghyr were included in Bengal. It must have been impossible for him to retain hold over Ghazipur without controlling these territories.¹⁰ Bārbak was closely following the expansionist policy of Ilyās Shāh.

III

An inscription of the Habshī ruler Saif al-Dīn Fīrūz (1486-1489 A. D) dated in 893 A. H /1487 A D is an extremely interesting record, throwing as it does much light on the social

be known. Iqrār Khān has such high-sounding titles as Khān-i-'Azam, Khāqān-i-Mu'azzam Mukarram Shāhib al-Saif wal qalam, Pahlūwī 'Asr wa al-zamān, and Ulūgh. This officer seems identical with Iqrār Khān mentioned in three other inscriptions of Bārbak Shāh, found at Triveni, Dinajpur and Mahi Santosh. Triveni inscription is dated in 860 A. H / 1455 A. D. and the other two contain the date 865 A. H./1460 A. D. Triveni inscription calls him Khān-i-Mu'azzam and describes his administrative positions as Sar Khail, Jāmdār-i-Ghair Mahallī and Sar Lashkar and Wazir of 'arsah Sājlā Mankhābād and Shahr Lāoblā, *E. I. Arab and Pers. Suppl*, 1953-54, pp. 20-21, S. Ahmed *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol IV, Rajshahi, 1960, p. 69. Most of the honorary titles of Iqrār Khān found in the Ghazipur inscription appear also in the Dinajpur inscription wherein he is called Sar Lashkar and Wazir, *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1937-38, p 38, XII (a), A. H Dani : *Bibliography of the Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal*, appendix, *J A S. P*, II (1957) p. 23, S Ahmed *op cit* pp. 72-73 In the Mahi Santosh inscription, the officer is mentioned as Khān-i-Mu'azzam, Ulūgh Iqrār Khān *J. A S B*. Vol. XLIV (1875) pt 1, p 291, Dani *op. cit.* pp 23-24, S. Ahmed *op cit.*, p. 74 cf also Y. K. Bukhari *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47

9. M. R Tarafdar *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p 9

10. For the strategic importance of this region for Bengal, cf., *ibid.*, p. 9.

conditions of the time. On the basis of the incomplete text of this epigraph published by H Blochmann¹¹ the present writer has said that it contains the *Shi'ite* tradition of *Panytan-i-Pāk*¹² But the view needs modification in the light of the newly published text and illustration of the inscription.¹³

As the twelve *shi'ite imāms* have been mentioned in the epigraph, it is obvious that there existed in East Bengal a *shi'ite* community of the *Ithnā 'Ashariyah* sect. Their close contact with the ruling class is proved by the fact that they could build a gate to the fort. The names of the four orthodox Caliphs were perhaps inscribed to placate the sentiment of the *sunnis* living in the area. Nothing is known about the original home-land of these *shi'ites*, the exact nature of their relationship with the rulers of Bengal and their whereabouts after the Abyssinians were banished from this country towards the end of the fifteenth century. One may also wonder if these *shi'ites* had any contact with their correlative in the Deccan and Persia. But the inscription in question together with the Gaud inscription of Fīrūz shows that there was an amount of *shi'ite* predominance in the *Ḥabshī* period.

11. J. A. S. B., Vol XLIII (1874), pt. 1, p. 300, Dani *op cit*, p. 39-40, the *shi'ite* nature of the inscription has been doubted by Dani. The Gaud inscription of the same ruler contains a prayer for Muhammad, Fātima, 'Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusain Ravenshaw *Gaud, Its Ruins and Inscriptions*, London, 1878 p 28 Dani doubts the *shi'ite* nature of this epigraph as well, for it contains like the other epigraph the names of the four *Khalifahs* at the corners *op cit*, pp 40-41.

12. *Husain Shahi Bengal*, pp 167-168

13. Desai *op. cit* pp. 18-19, pl V (a). The central portion of the stone slab begins with *bismillāh* and the first creed and then it continues to give a *shi'ite darūd* mentioning the names of Muhammad al-Mustafa, 'Alī al-Murtaḍā, Fātimat al-Zuhrā, Hasan Muṭtabā (?), Husain al-*Shahīd* *bakarbālā*, Zayn al-'Ābidīn 'Alī, Bāqir al-Muhammad, J'afar al-Sādiq, Mūsa al-Kāzīm, 'Alī Ridā, Muhammad al-Taḳī, 'Alī al-Naqī, Ḥasan 'Askarī and Muhammad al-Mahdī. It has been stated in the last three lines that the gate of a fort was completed on the 4th Muharram, 893 A H / 20th December, 1487 A D, in the reign of Saif al-Dīn Fīrūz. A square figure in each of the four corners of the inscription contains the name of one of the first four *Khalifahs*. The inscription was found at Garh Jaripa, Sherpur in the Mymensingh District.

IV

The earliest recorded date of 'Alā' al-Dīn Husain Shāh as shown by the Depara inscription, is Jumādā II, 899 A.H./March, 1494 A.D.,¹⁴ not 10th Dhī'l-Qa'da, 899 A.H./13th August, 1494, as held by the present writer on the basis of the Malda inscription.¹⁵ The Depara inscription does not contain the *Julūs* title and *Kunya* of Husain, nor his father's name. One may reasonably believe that Husain was yet to assert himself as the Sultān of Bengal. The record contains the name of Majlis Bārbak styled *Majlis al-Majālis* whose name appears again in the Kalna inscription dated in 918 A.H./1512 A.D.,¹⁶ wherein he is called *Majlis al-Mu'azzam*. This person was the Governor over the places whence the inscriptions were issued. Hājji Dabīr states that "he who is permitted to take a seat in the presence of the King, is given the title *Majlis* to which a term in apposition to his (status) is appended".¹⁷ It is thus quite apparent that Majlis Bārbak held the rank of a minister who could seat in the king's assembly. His name finds respectful mention also in a *prāśasti* of the *Suddhārtha-sandipani*, a commentary on Bhavabhūti's drama, the *Mālatīmādhava*, composed by Acārya Mahādeva in the month of Vaiśākh, 1416 Śaka/April, 1494 at Navadvīpa.¹⁸ The officer is

14. Discovered by Miss Munira Khatun on a ruined mosque in the village of Depara to the north-east of Pānduā in the Hooghly District, the epigraph now lies in the National Museum, Calcutta. The day of the month is partly lost from the text, but from the surviving word 'fourth' it appears that the day was either 4th or 14th or 24th. M. F. Khan 'Three New Inscriptions of Alauddin Husain Shāh', *E. I. Arab. and Pers. Suppl.* 1965, pp. 23-25, pl. IX (b).
15. *Husain Shah Bengal*, p. 353 Simon Digby commits the same mistake when he says, "... the first with Husayn Shāh as the reigning Sultān is dated Dhī'l-Qa'dā 899/August 1494",. 'The Fate of Dāniyāl, Prince of Bengal, In the light of an Unpublished Inscription' *Bulletin of The School of Oriental And African Studies (B S O. A S)* XXXVI (1973), pt 3 p 598, f n 35.
16. M. F. Khan *op cit.* pp 24-25 pl IX (a).
17. Zafarū'l-Wāliḥ, Vol II, London, 1921, p 613, quoted in *E. I. Arab. and Pers. Suppl.* 1955-56, p 53, f n 3. and also M. F. Khan. *op. cit.*, p 28.
18. Quoted by D. C. Bhattacharya *Vāṅgālir Sārasvata Avadāna*, I, Calcutta, 1358 B S, p. 100, cf S. Mukhopadhyaya *Vanlār Itihāse Dusa Vasar Svādhin Sultānder Amal*, Calcutta, 1966 pp 284 and 359.

called *gauḍamahimahendrasacivaśreṇī-śirobhūsana* or 'the ornament of the heads of ministers of the Lord of Gauda' which sounds like a Sanskrit rendering of *Majlis al-Majālis* or *Majlis al-Mu'azzam*. Although it is not clearly known whether Mahādeva wrote the commentary under the direct patronage of Majlis Bārbak, we are told that the minister "always used to preserve generously the achievements of the talented persons" (*Yogakṣema manuksaṇam-kṛtadhīyām nurvāṇamātānavatī*). He is said to have been born like Rāma at the age of *kalī* at the desire of the *satyāvātāra*. We may allow for poetic superfluity and hyperbole.

V

While explaining the terms *al-Husainshāhi* appearing on some of the numismatic issues of Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh (1481-1486 A.D.) and also the words *Badr Shāhi* of several coins of Ghīyāth al-Dīn Mahmūd (1532-1538 A.D.), A B M. Habibullah holds the view that these were the popular names of the Sultāns concerned.¹⁹ Relying on the Shahpur inscription of Mahmūd²⁰ he also believes that the original name of the ruler was 'Abdu'l-Badr which may not be at all a proper name. A fresh edition of the inscription clearly shows that the Sultān was popularly known as *al-Badr Shāhi*²¹

19. *History of Bengal*, Vol II, *op. cit.*, p. 136, f. n. I and p. 159, f. n. I.

20. Ilahi Bakhsh copied the text of the inscription in the *Khurshid-i-Jahān Numā*. Then H. Beveridge published the text with a translation in *J. A S B*, Vol LXIV (1895), pp. 214-15. N. B. Roy published a version of the same text with some modifications *J. A. S. B.*, Letters, Vol. XVII (1951), No. 3, pp. 217-218. S. Ahmed also includes the text, *op. cit.* p. 140. M. Ishaque has critically edited the inscription and published its illustration as well.

21. M. Ishaque 'Arabic and Persian Inscriptions from the B. R. Sen Museum, Malda, West Bengal', *E. I. Arab. and Pers. Suppl.*, 1955-56, p. 39, pl X (b). As the wrongly quoted versions of the inscription have been the cause of much misunderstanding and misinterpretation of certain historical materials, we quote the recently established text with the translation and comments supplied by the editor.

(۱) بنی هذا الباب للمحمین الحصین للحماية والحصین السلطان بن السلطان غیاث الدین والدین ابوالظفر محمود شاه السلطان ابن حسین شاه

A. Karim makes an attempt to detect in the last line of the inscription the proper name Abi'l Multajā "who is better known as 'Abd Shāh' and 'Abd al-Badr'" and believes that this saint built the gate referred to in the text and that Mahmūd Shāh showed him respect by inscribing the words *Badr Shāhī* on his coins²² Drawing logical inference and analogy from these epigraphic and numismatic records, he holds that the expression *Husain Shāhī* of the coins of Fath Shāh refers to Ashraf al-Husainī

(۲) السلطان ابن سيد اشرف الحسيني الملتجى الى الفضل الهى
المشهور بالعبد البدر شاهى خلد الله ملكه وسلطانه فى سنة ثلث
اربعين وتسعمائة -

"This gate of the impregnable fort was constructed for the defence and security (of the kingdom and people) by the Sultān, son of Sultān, *Ghiyāthu'd-Dunyā wa'd-Dīn* Abu'l Muzaffar Maḥmūd Shāh, the Sultān, son of Husain Shāh, the Sultān, son of Sayyid Ashraf al-Husainī, seeker of the grace of God, well known as 'the slave, al-Badr Shāhī', may Allāh endure his country and sovereignty for ever, in the year nine hundred and forty three (1536-37 A. D.)".

"The inscriptions of this king so far discovered do not bear a date later than 941, while this inscription has extended his rule by two years. But more important is its mention of the popular name of the king as it does. The coins of Mahmūd Shāh also bear the phrase *Badr Shāhī*, which until the discovery of this inscription, had remained unexplained. With the clear mention of the popular name of the king in the inscription, this phrase has been satisfactorily explained. But unfortunately, *Ilāhī Bakhsh*'s reading has been mainly responsible for the mistake in the actual wording of the name. In the latest work on the history of Bengal, it is stated that the name of the king was 'Abdu'l Badr which to my mind is far from correct. *Badr Shāhī* and not 'Abdu'l Badr seems to have been the correct nomenclature, as is clearly inscribed on his coins. The latter has found currency probably due to the phrase "المشهور بالعبد البدر شاهى" in the second line of the inscription. If "Abdu'l Badr Shāhī" were intended here, the text ought to have been المشهور بعبد البدر شاهى. Moreover, the name 'Abdu'l Badr sounds peculiar. As it is, the word "العبد" should not be taken as a part of the name but as meaning 'the humble slave'". p. 39. The editor of the Journal quotes texts of the inscription as given by *Ilāhī Bakhsh* and N. B. Roy and finds out mistakes in them. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

22. 'Significance of the words "Al-Husain Shāhī" in the coins of Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Fath Shāh,' *J A S. P* Vol XIV (1969), No. 2. p. 140.

or his son Ḥusam who is believed to "have played a very prominent part in putting Fath Shāh to the throne . . ." ²³ But a part of the second line of the Shahpur inscription reads :—الملتجى الى - الملتي الى المشهور بالعبد البدر شاهي - The term ابى does not appear before الملتي in the illustration and what has been quoted just now seems but distinct phrases qualifying the Sultān duly mentioned in the first line of the epigraph. Thus it is quite evident that *al-Badr Shāhi* was the popular name of Mahmūd. The words *al-Ḥusam Shāhi* and *Suyad Shāhi* of the coins of Fath Shāh may have a similar implication. A Karīm's conjectural identification of Sayyid Ashraf al-Ḥusamī with *Khān Mu'azzam Ashraf Khān* and Sayyid 'Azam Sayyid Dastūr of some Ilyās Shāhi inscriptions and his speculation about the formation of a political party supporting the claim of Fath Shāh to the throne of Gaud together with the existence of a saint Abī'l Multajā, appear to be a *tour de force*. Karīm has evidently tried to build up the structure of a very weak hypothesis on the basis of a still weaker one. But the recent edition of the Shahpur inscription has destroyed their foundation

VI

Several coins of Ḥusain Shāh dated in 899 A. H / 1494 A. D., 910 A. H / 1504 A. D., 915 A. H / 1509 A. D., 919 A. H / 1513 A. D., 921 A. H / 1515 A. D., 922 A. H / 1516 A. D. and 924 A. H / 1518 A. D. style the Sultān as الفاتح الكامرو وكامته (conqueror of Kamrū and Kāmta and Jājnagar and Orissa). On the basis of these numismatic records the present writer has argued that 'Alā' al-Dīn Husain Shāh led expeditions against Kāmṛūp and Kāmtah and Jājnagar and Orissa in the year of his accession in 1494 A. D., that Kāmṛūp and Kāmtah were occupied in 1498 A. D. and that Ḥusain's war with Orissa continued almost throughout his reign ²⁴ These views have been contradicted by A. Karīm whose objections and stipulations are summarised here ²⁵

23. *Ibid*, p 139

24. *Husain Shah Bengal*, p. 46ff, also my paper, "The Dates of Husain Shah's Expeditions against Kamrup and Orissa", *Journal of The Numismatic Society of India (J. N. S. I.)* Vol XIX (1957), pt. I, p 54ff.

25. 'Significance of the legend "al-Fath al-Kāmṛū wa Kāmta wa Jājnagar wa Orissa" in the Coins of 'Alā' al-Dīn Ḥusain Shāh', *J. A. S. P.*, Vol. XV (1970) No. I. p 1ff.

It was impossible for Ḥusain to conquer Kāmṛūp, Kāmta, Jājnagar and Orissa immediately after occupying the throne in 899 A. H / 1494 A. D., for, the disturbed political affairs, after the dynastic revolution was over, needed his presence at the capital. So the numismatic legend quoted above, was intended to make it public that Husain as the Prime Minister of Muzaffar Shāh (1490-1494 A. D.) and also in the capacity of a noble in the late Ilyās Shāhī period had conquered parts of these territories "The circumstances in which Hussain Shāh occupied the throne necessitated such publicity in his favour" Following some earlier scholars, A. Karim concludes that the Kāmṛūp-Kāmta expeditions began in 1498 A. D. when Prince Dāniyāl had joined the forces after having completed a vault over the shrine of Shāh Nāfah at Munghyr, and that they came to an end in 907 A. H / 1502 A. D., a date found in the Darasbari inscription which refers to the conquest of Kāmṛūp and Kāmta by Ḥusain "For the Jājnagar-Orissa campaigns the known dates are 1509, 1513 and 1516" and the dates supplied by the coins "particularly those of 899/1493-94 do not find corroboration in other sources."

It cannot be believed that Ḥusain could conquer Kāmṛūp, Kāmta, Jājnagar and Orissa within the first year of his reign. This is why the numismatic legend in question cannot be accepted in a literal sense; but it can be inferred that Husain led expeditions in 899 A. H / 1494 A. D. against the neighbouring countries. The present writer would like to modify his earlier view. The expression "conqueror of Kāmṛūp and Kāmta and Jājnagar and Orissa", found on the coins of the first year of Ḥusain's reign, implies that the Sultān inherited the legacy of hostility to the kings of Kāmṛūp and Orissa from the previous regime. Bārbak Shāh's military policy towards these countries clearly indicates that their rulers were potential enemies of Bengal. The frontier regions must have been defended even when the Bengal capital was under the grip of a civil war for a period of four months only.²⁶ Withdrawal of forces from the frontiers

26. *The History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p 140

would have meant immediate advantage for the enemies. As soon as Husain ascended the throne, he perhaps found it expedient to claim victory over the neighbours either in justification of partial success or fictitiously. As indicated by A. Karim, the coins under discussion had perhaps some publicity value, but it seems impossible to ascertain Husain's association with the last Ilyās Shāhī rulers for whom he is said to have fought on the frontiers. We have already said that A. Karim's hypothesis about Husain's relationship with the Ilyās Shāhī rulers has no solid basis. It is sure that Husain was the Prime Minister of the last Abyssinian Sultān whose policy towards Kāmṛūp and Orissa might have been considerably influenced by him.

To say that hostilities between Kāmṛūp-Kāmta and Bengal were going on even in the first year of Husain's reign, amounts to an approximation of truth. A recently published coin dating from the year 900 A. H./1495 A. D. clearly reads on the reverse²⁷ :

السلطان المتوكل على الله الفاتح للكامرو - والكامته دشتيدالله سيد -
علاو الدنيا والدين ابو الظفر حسين شاه - سلطان فاتح كامته -

The legend does not refer to the conquest of Orissa, but mentions the Sultān as "the conqueror of Kāmṛū and Kāmta" and at the end emphasises "the conquest of Kāmta" by the Sultān. The conquest of Kāmta in 900 A. H./1495 A. D. indicates that Bengal forces were fighting with the soldiers of Kāmta in the same year prior to the conquest of the country and also perhaps in the previous year. S Digby cites at length the opinion of the present writer about the series of Husain Shāhī coins bearing the legend "conqueror of Kāmṛūp and Kāmta and Jājnagar and Orissa", but he considers the coin of 899 A. H./1494 A. D. with the same legend as a token issue without adducing reasons.²⁸ Attack on Kāmta in 1495 A. D. and its conquest by Husain in the same year look extremely sudden and dramatic unless we presume that they indicate continuation of hostilities from the previous regime. Kāmta was situated to the west of Kāmṛūp and demarcated from the latter by the river Banās or Manasā. It was not at all impossible for the Bengal Sultān to occupy Kāmṛūp

27. Simon Digby *op cit*, p. 599, pl. II

28. *Ibid*, pp. 593, 597 and 598. The absence of the last digit in 889 may be due to withering or the work of "the vile hands of shroffs"

within a few years of the conquest of Kāmta and the year 1498 A D. which is traditionally regarded as the date of the fall of Kāmtāpur, may be a correct date. It can never be shown that the completion of the madiasah referred to in the English Bazar inscription dated 1st Ramaḍān, 907 A. H. / 10th March, 1502 A.D. coincided with the completion of the Kāmṛūp war. The epigraph has simply referred to the conquest of Kāmṛūp and Kāmta only as an event of the past. No reference to the conquest of Orissa has been made, for war with that kingdom was still continuing. As the coins referring to the conquest of Kāmṛūp and Orissa had circulation throughout the entire kingdom of Bengal, they were intended to serve some purpose of propaganda which a fixed inscription could never do. The present writer nowhere said that "Husayn Shāh's invasions of Assam must have...continued till late in the reign"²⁹ Depending on E. Gait he has accepted 1498 A D. as the date of the fall of Kāmtāpur and stated that the Muslim army was defeated in Assam "in the rainy season of 1499 A D."³⁰ There may be some doubts about these dates; but they can be reviewed whenever fresh materials are available confirming some other dates.

Provocation from Nīlāmvar was perhaps a positive factor which also Husain wanted to counter by attacking the enemy. I have cited Buchanan-Hamilton according to whom the Khen ruler occupied Kāntāduār and Ghorāghāt and the same author also noticed traces of a military road connecting the Khen capital with Ghorāghāt on the Karatoyā.³¹ A. Karim does not attach any importance to all this, "because the contention is based on Buchanan, a later writer". He is not prepared either to accept the assumption that Bengal had any territorial loss during the Abyssinian regime.³² We are apt to accept as genuine whatever is stated by Ghulām Husain Salīm in the *Riyād al-Salāṭīn*, but we hesitate to credit the accounts of Salīm's junior contemporary Buchanan-Hamilton whose statements and comments

29. S. Digby *op. cit.*, p. 593

30. *J. N. S. I. op. cit.* pp. 56-58, *Husain Shahi Bengal* pp 48-49

31. *History of Bengal*, II, *op. cit.* p. 146, *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 47

32. *J. A. S. P.*, XVI, 1, p. 4, cf. also Vol. X. (1965), No. 2, pp 175-76 of the same journal.

(including those copied from the Pānduā Manuscript) are generally based on his personal observations and investigations. Without noticing our reference to the accounts of Buchanan-Hamilton, Simon Digby contradicts our view about the territorial loss of Bengal in these words, "This, however, is speculation without evidence".³³ Even if we ignore the remarks of the "late writer", we have a right to exercise historical imagination concerning the problem. The short Abyssinian regime is but a period of political intrigues and murders combined with usurpation and tyrannical rule. It is quite natural that the traditional enemies of Bengal on the north-east and south-west frontiers would take advantage of such a state of disorder to expand their respective territories at the expense of the Muslim kingdom. We have shown above that Bārbak Shāh's territories extended far beyond the western border of Tīrhut including Ghazipur on the border of Uttar Pradesh. But the single inscription of Shams al-Dīn Muzaffar³⁴ found at Champaran indicates that Bhagalpur was the north-western limit of Bengal in the period in question and the regions beyond this point seems to have been lost. But the first two Husain-Shāhī rulers had to annex the north-western region including the whole of Tīrhut, Saran and Munghyr and actually the entire area extending up to Hajipur, Azamgarh and Kharid.³⁵ There are again strong reasons to believe that Ghorāghāt and Kāntāduāī were lost to Bengal obviously during the Habshi regime. Only the Kalna inscriptions of Saif al-Dīn Firūz (1486-1489 A. D.) and Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd II (1490--1491 A. D.), both dated in 895 A. D. /1489-90 A. D.³⁶ indicate a process of territorial expansion in the south-western direction. No other inscription of the Habshi rulers have been found in south-west Bengal bordering on the Orissan frontier, although a considerable number of epigraphic records dating from the reigns of Bārbak, Husain and Nusrat has been discovered in the same regions. How do we then

33. *Op. cit*, p. 597

34. Dani *op cit* p. 137, S. Ahmed *op cit* pp. 144-145.

35. *History of Bengal*, II, *op. cit*, pp. 146, 149, 155 and 156, *Husain Shahi Bengal*, pp. 9, 39, 69, 71, 73, and 74.

36. *J. B. O. R. S.* IV (1918), pp. 181-182, Dani *op cit*, p. 39, S. Ahmed. *op cit* pp. 132-133 and 139-40

believe that the Habshī rulers were successful in retaining the territories annexed by their predecessors ?

A. Karīm has failed to notice our doubts about the historical value of the tradition which connects Dāniyāl with Husain's Assam expedition³⁷ A recently published inscription shows that on the 10th Dhī'l Ḥajja, 905 A. H/17th July, 1500 A. D., Dāniyāl constructed a congregational mosque perhaps within the metropolitan area of Gauḍ³⁸ S. Digby has supplied archaeological and literary materials strengthened by arguments dissociating Dāniyāl completely from the Assām expedition.³⁹ Thus the view

37. cf. "According to the *Āsām Burāñjī*, reproduced in Princep's *Useful Tables*, Dulāl Ghāzī or Dāniyāl was succeeded by two other governors, named Musundar Ghāzī and Sultān Ghiyāth-ud-dīn respectively; *J A S B*, 1872, p. 335. But this account is not found in the *Ahom Burāñjī* edited and translated by G. C. Barua. It is absent also in other versions of the *Burāñjī*. Due to these reasons, the present writer is unwilling to attach any undue importance to this information". *Husain Shahī Bengal*, pp. 45-46, fn. 5, cf. also p. 48 where I have argued that 1498, the traditional date of the fall of Kāmtāpur "may also appear to be satisfactory to those who are in favour of connecting Dāniyāl with the affairs of Kāmrūpa and Assam". S. Digby has shown that the above tradition has come down to Princep from Halirama Dhakiyal Phukkan's *Āsām Burāñjī*, a Bengali booklet written in 1829, through Tarachund Chukruvartee's review of the same published in *Asiatic Journal*, NS II. 1830, pp. 297, and 303 and that the tradition is historically unreliable. A. B. M. Habibullah has also clearly indicated the source of the tradition without mentioning Chukruvartee's review *History of Bengal*, II, p. 147, f. n. 2.

38. S. Digby *op cit*, p. 589, pl. 1.

39. The inscription published by S. Digby proves that Dāniyāl who was constructing a mosque at Gauḍ in 1500 A. D., could not be associated with the Assam expedition supposed to have started from the year 1498 A. D. For the explanation of the term *Dulāl*, erroneously identified with Dāniyāl, cf. Digby *op cit*, pp. 595-596. This epigraph and also the other one dated in 900 A. H/1495 A. D. *op cit*, p. 591 undoubtedly show 'the Bow and Arrow Type' of Tughhrā, but with 'the Hooded-Serpent motif' represented by such combinations of letters as  and . When this motif dominates the surface of a Tughhrā inscription, the style of writing is called 'the Hooded-Serpent' Tughhrā. 'The Hooded-Serpent motif' is generally detached from the epigraphic text and look floating. The two inscriptions have accommodated the principal motif of 'the Hooded-Serpent' Tughhrā, although they do not belong to that type.

that Kāmrūp-Kāmta was occupied between 1498 A. D. and 1502 A. D., held by several scholars including A. Karim, is rendered obsolete not only by what the present writer has said, but also by the recently available archaeological materials.

A. Karim has confused ideas about the geographical positions of Kāmrūp and Kāmta and also about the sequence of Husain's expeditions beyond the north-eastern frontier of Bengal. About the location of the two countries, he says, "Kāmrūp extended from the western bank of the river Brahmaputra to the eastern bank of the river Banās and the region lying to the west of the Brahmaputra up to the river Karatoyā is identified with Kāmtah".⁴⁰ But the present writer has ascertained the following from the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaibi* (which A. Karim has also cited), "... Kāmrūpa extended from the western bank of the Brahmaputra to the eastern bank of the river Banās (Manasā) and the region lying between this river and the river Karatoyā in the west was called Kāmta".⁴¹ Thus it is clear that the territory of Kāmta was confined between the Banās and the Karatoyā. But A. Karim's statement that the region extending between the Brahmaputra and the Karatoyā was named Kāmta, taken together with the first part of the sentence quoted from his article clearly implies that Kāmrūp was included within Kāmta, an assertion totally negated by the piece of information cited from the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaibi*.

The order in which the names of Kāmrūp and Kāmta have appeared on numismatic and epigraphic records, seems to have affected the notions of S. Digby about the geographical positions of the two regions. Digby says, "... the expedition marched on to Kāmta only after the Muslim hold upon Kāmrū had been consolidated".⁴² If the piece of information supplied by the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaibi* is considered credible we have adequate reasons to infer that the conquest of Kāmta was but a preliminary to the Muslim occupation of Kāmrūp. Digby's remarks may be contrasted with those of H. Stapleton according to whom Kāmrūp used to include

⁴⁰ J. A. S. P., XV, I, p. 2.

⁴¹ Husain Shahi Bengal, pp 40.

⁴² Op. cit., p. 601.

northern Mymensingh, north and east of the Brahmaputra as well and "the Kāmrū" of Ḥusain Shāh's coins is but identical with "a large portion of south-eastern Mymensingh . . called after Ḥusain Shāh".⁴³ Although it is quite probable that Kāmrūp included some of the adjoining regions at the different periods of its history, the Kāmrū of the Ḥusain Shāhī coins discussed above, has altogether a specific geographical extent. The contention is confirmed by the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaibī* and Stapleton's inference is negated both by geographical and historical considerations. Stapleton's hypothesis implies that Ḥusain had no control over Kāmrūp proper whose extent is duly specified in the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaibī* and also indicated in the *Ā'in-i-Ākbarī*.⁴⁴ If we accept Stapleton's hypothesis, we cannot satisfactorily explain the expeditions of the Bengal soldiers along the northern and southern banks of the Brahmaputra, which are elaborately narrated in the different versions of the Ahom Burañjis.⁴⁵ The Assamese soldiers fought the invaders at different places in the Brahmaputra valley including Singri and Nārāyanpur in the Darrang District, Kaliabar, Dui-munihila and Sala in Nowgong and on the Bharali and Dikrai rivers in the Tezpur and Sibsagar Districts respectively.⁴⁶ Stapleton's hypothesis implies that the Bengali soldiers reached the upper Brahmaputra valley after having crossed the inaccessible regions of the Garo and Khasi Hills, an inference for which there is no support up till now. It seems highly probable that Ḥusain's soldiers crossed the river Karatoyā starting from some place in the Ghorāghāt region. Then following some traditional route

43. 'Contributions to the History and Ethnology of North-Eastern India', *J A S. B.*, 1910, p 623

44. *Ā'in*, vol II, Eng tran H. S. Jarrett, 2nd ed. revised by J N. Sarkar, p 130.

45. Some of these are *Āsām Burañji*, ed. G Barua, Nowgong, 1875; *Āsām Burañji*, ed. G. C. Barua, Calcutta, 1930, *Āsām Burañji* and *Deodhāi Āsām Burañji*, both ed. S K Bhuiṇa, from Gauhati, in 1930, and 1932 respectively. The relevant materials from these sources have been used in *Husain Shah Bengal*, pp. 45, 48, 77 and 79-80, cf. also Gait *op cit* pp 88-89, S N Bhattacharya . *op. cit.*, pp 88-92, *History of Bengal*, II, pp. 147, and 58.

46. With the accounts cited in f n 45 above cf Map of Assam, facing p. I Gait *op. cit.*

i. e., either the road constructed by Nīlāmvar to connect Kāmtapur with North Bengal or the one associated with Bakhtiyār Khaljī's projected Tibet expedition,⁴⁷ they occupied Kāmta and Kāmṛūp at least upto the Barnadī which is regarded as the boundary of the last Khen king's capital. That the expeditions were conducted in the Brahmaputra valley from the Muslim headquarters at Hajo to the west of the same river, is just a reasonable guess.

Digby denies the existence of the Khen dynasty in the following words. "If the *Āsām burañī* is to be believed there was no single 'ruler of Kāmṛūp' in this period"⁴⁸. But the *Āsām Burañī*, which he quotes from the review of Chukruvarttee, reads: "The dominions of Mriganku were, after his death, divided into a number of petty independent states, which were governed by twelve chiefs. . ."⁴⁹ The early history of Assam and Kāmṛūp is shrouded in obscurity. Those who have worked on the field have depended upon a mass of local traditions which very often do not agree. Out of these confusing materials scholars have been able to discover the line of three kings, Nīladvaj, Chakradhvaj and Nīlāmvar who ruled over Kāmṛūp and Kāmta in regular succession. The surname Khen which they bore is said to be a corrupt form of the Muslim title *Khān*. It is impossible to trace the racial origin of these people. At about the beginning of the present century when E. Gait was writing his *History of Assam*, most of the Khens were absorbed into other communities and those who still retained their tribal nomenclatures called themselves Kāyasthas whose physiognomy is said to have betrayed "a considerable infusion of Aryan blood" which, however, afforded

47. It is difficult to indicate the route followed by the Bengali soldiers who might have marched along any obscure and less frequented mountain passage to avoid enemy's attack. For controversy about Bakhtiyār's route, cf. N. K. Bhattasali *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1933, pp. 49-62, Z. V. Toghian 'About the Campaign of Indian Khalach-Turks against the Kerats of Mongolia in the North-Eastern Tibet in the Years 1205-6', *Proceedings of the XXXVth International Congress of Orientalists*, Delhi, 1968 II, pp. 174-78, S. Digby: *War-Horse And Elephant in the Delhi Sultanate*, Oxford, 1971; pp. 45-46.

48. *B. S. O. A. S. op. cit.* p. 597.

49. *Ibid.* p. 594.

“no clue to their origin”. It is also believed that they belonged to “a race of Tibeto-Burmans, known as Bodos ...”⁵⁰ When Buchanan-Hamilton visited Kuch Bihar in the early part of the nineteenth century, he found the region abounding in legends and traditions about the Khens⁵¹. Without investigating the historical accounts of Kām̐rūp and Assam and also the traditions which supply materials for those accounts, S. Digby tends to destroy what has been built up by generations of scholars. But the *Āsām Burāñjī* which is the only source of his information gives clue to the foundation of the Khen dynasty. The sentence partly quoted above from Chukruvarttee’s review of the work shows that the death of Mriganku was followed by a state of disorder in Kām̐rūp; but the missing portion of the story appears in other traditions: “When Mriganku died without any issue the throne was seized by an adventurous Bhuyan Chief, who had the surname Khan, but who on becoming king assumed the name Niladhvaj”⁵². This king is one of the “twelve Chiefs” mentioned in Digby’s source.

A. Karīm completely relies on the *Riyāḍ al-Salāṭīn* for the description of Ḥusain Shāh’s Assam expedition, for he thinks that this work, the *Ālamgīrnāmah* and the *Fathīya-i-Ibriya* give an “identical account” of the same expedition. But the following information supplied by the *Riyāḍ*, is totally absent in the two earlier sources: “. . . And conquering the whole of that country upto Kām̐rūp, Kāmtah and other districts which were subject to powerful Rajas, like Rūp Narain and Mal Kunwar, and Gasa Lakhan and Lachmi Narain and others, he collected much wealth from the conquered tracts; and the Afghāns demolishing those Rajas’ buildings, erected new buildings . . .”⁵³. The remaining

50 Stapleton *op. cit.* pp. 621-622; Gait *op. cit.* pp. 43-44, K. L. Barua . *Early History of Kamarupa From the Earliest Times to the End of the Sixteenth Century*, Shillong, 1933, pp. 282-83. *History of Bengal*, II, pp. 134 and 146.

51. M. Martin . *op. cit.*, II, 680-82, III, 410, 425-26.

52. K. L. Barua *op. cit.*, 282.

53. *op. cit.* Eng. tran. quoted by A. Karīm. *J. A S P.* XV, I, p. 4.

portions of the narration of the expedition tally with what we find in the earlier sources. Thus the accounts supplied by the three Persian works are not identical. Ghulām Husam Salīm has obviously given a confused account of the conquest of Kāmrūp and Kāmta and the subsequent Assam expedition⁵⁴ which ultimately ended in failure, while the earlier two works have narrated the Assam expedition only. One may obviously notice two distinct phases in the military activities of Husam at the north-eastern frontier. The first phase ended with the conquest of Kāmrūp and Kāmta duly recorded on some Husam Shāhī coins and inscriptions and the second phase began with the further advance of the Bengali forces along the Brahmaputra valley, graphically described in the '*Ālamgīrnāmah* and the *Fathīya-i-Ibriya*. When A. Karim holds that "the Kāmrūp-Kāmtah expedition was ultimately a failure,"⁵⁵ he fails to distinguish the two phases indicated by us and his confusion has originated from his sole reliance on the *Riyāḍ*. Husain and at least two of his successors held Kāmrūp and Kāmta under their control and it was from this region that they were leading unsuccessful expeditions in the upper Brahmaputra valley⁵⁶. All this has escaped the learned scholar's notice.

VII

A. Karim observes, "As for the war in south-western front, i. e. Orissa, Dr. Tarafdar writes on the doubtful testimony of Duarte Barbosa that 'There was a state of war between Bengal and Orissa,'"⁵⁷ The scholar has not explained why the 'testimony' is 'doubtful'. Moreover, the statement is completely misleading, for, the present writer has collected together materials not only from Barbosa, but also from other literary and archaeological sources including the biographies of Cantanya, Buchanan-Hamilton's *Pāṇḍuā* Manuscript, the *Riyāḍ al-Salāṭīn*, the *Mādā Pañjī* (which the scholar has used with felicity in his paper), a number of Bengal

54. *History of Bengal*, II, p. 147.

55. *J. A. S. P.*, XV, I, p. 6

56. *Husam Shah Bengal*, pp. 48-49, 77 and 79-80, cf. also *History of Bengal*, II, pp. 147, 157-158.

57. *J. A. S. P.* XV, I, p. 4

coins cited above and also at least two inscriptions issued by Pratāp Rudra Deva of Orissa in 1500 A. D. and 1510-11 A. D.⁵⁸ The categorical statement that only the *Mādlā Pañjī* and Vaisnava literature help us in fixing the dates of Orissan campaigns between 1509 A. D. and 1516 A. D., is without any basis⁵⁹

Now an attempt may be made to prepare a sequence of Husain's Orissan expeditions. As some of the coins of Husain dated in 899 A. H /1494 A. D. contain the expression, "conqueror of Kāmruṇ and Kāmta and Jājnagar, and Orissa," it may be safely inferred that Husain and his predecessors Muzaffar Shāh, Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd II and Saif al-Dīn Fīrūz had conflicts with the Orissan ruler Purusottama Deva, father of Pratāp Rudra Deva. As already indicated the Kalna inscriptions of, Saif al-Dīn Fīrūz and Mahmūd II show the expansion of Bengal kingdom in the direction of Orissa. Had Bengal maintained good neighbourly relationship with Orissa, the legend cited above would not have been used on the coins of 899 A. H /1494 A. D. The term *al-fāṭih* or 'conqueror' contains an amount of exaggeration and the date 1494 A. D. which is the first year of Husain Shāh's reign indicates that the hostility between Bengal and Orissa was but a continuity from the earlier reigns. In the *Bhaktibhāgavata-Mahākāvya* composed in 1509-10 A. D. by Pratāp Rudra's preceptor Jīvadevāchārya Kavīdaṇḍim it is clearly stated that the king defeated the ruler of Gaud within the six weeks of his accession to the throne which had taken place in 1497 A. D.⁶⁰ The claim of victory over the Bengal ruler may or may not be just; unless there was a state of emergency, the new Orissan ruler would not have encountered the Bengal Sultān. Pratāp Rudra's prompt action indicates that Orissa was attacked by the Sultān of Bengal in 1497 A. D. or 1496 A. D. In an inscription of the Chennā Keśava temple in the Andhra State, executed on the day of lunar eclipse, month of Kārtik, 1422 Śaka/15th November 1500 A. D., it has been said that the last

58. *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 49 ff.

59. *J. A. S. P.* XV, I, p. 8.

60. quoted from *J. A. S.*, Vol. IV, 1962, pp. 26-27, by S. Mukhopadhyaya :
op cit 307-308 . cf. also *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 52, f n. 3.

victory of the king, the conqueror of enemies, was narrated through the cries of the Gauḍarāja.⁶¹ Allowing for the hyperbolic and eulogistic nature of the language, the epigraph refers to a conflict between the soldiers of Orissa and Bengal. It is not possible to ascertain whether the military engagement is identical with that of 1497 A. D. According to the Kāvālī plate inscription dated in 1432 Śaka/1510 A. D.,⁶² Pratāp Rudra took the title of *Pancagaḍa-adhināyaka* or 'the Overlord of the Five Gaudas' after having defeated the Bengal ruler. This epigraph and also perhaps Ḥusain's coins of 915 A. H./1509 A. D showing the tendencious legend "The conqueror of Kāmṛūp and Kāmṭa and Jājnagar and Orissa" corroborate the reported fact of Ḥusain's attack on Puri in 1509 A. D. and his subsequent retreat towards Gaḍmāndāran as narrated in the *Mādlā Pañji*.⁶³ After his renunciation in 1509 A. D. Śrī Caitanya was going from Bengal to Puri. As there were hostilities between the two neigh-

61. *Ibid.*, S. Mukhopadhyaya : *op. cit.* pp. 304-305.

62. R. D Banerjee *History of Orissa* I Calcutta, 1930, p. 328, *J N. S I. op. cit.* p. 58; *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 52, S. Mokhopadhyaya *op. cit.* pp. 305-306

63. *J. A. S. B.*, LXXIX (1900) pt. I, No. 2, p. 136; *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 51, S. Mukhopadhyaya *op. cit.*, pp 301-303, This writer prefers 1510 A. D. to 1509 A. D. as the date of the attack. The details of the *Mādlā Pañji* have been reproduced with certain variations in the *Katakarājavamsāvalī*, a comparatively recent work, *ibid.*, pp. 309-310. In a colophon of the *Sarasvatīvilāsam*, a *smṛti* work composed sometime before June, 1516 A. D. either by Pratāparudra or his court poet Lolla Lakṣmidhara, it is said that the king gave shelter and protection to Sultān Ḥusain Shāh, the Lord of Javunāpur, who had sought shelter, cf *śaranāgata-javunāpurādhiśvara-husanasāhā-suratrāna-śarana-raksana*, quoted by Sukumar Sen *Madhyayuger Vanlā O Vanālī*, Calcutta, 1352 B. S., p. 22, also S. Mukhopadhyaya who gives a slightly different reading, *op. cit.* p 306. These scholars have obviously identified this *husanasāhā-suratrāna* with Husain of Bengal who is generally called *Gaudarāja* and *Gaudendra* in the inscriptions of Pratāparudra Deva. But *Javunāpur* in the above line appears to be a corrupt form of 'Javanapur' identical with Jaunpur. Mian Muhammad Saeed. The *Sharqi Sultanate of Jaunpur A Political and Cultural History*, Karachi, 1972, p. 118. It seems that the last Sharqi ruler sought help from the Orissan King to gain his lost kingdom some time between 1495 A. D. and 1500 A. D. when he had made a desperate attempt to organise his resources against Sikandar Lodi.

bourly countries, he had to cross the Ganges at Chhatrabhog with Rāmcandra Khān's help.⁶⁴ This was perhaps the time when Bengal forces had attacked Purī. When the Vaiṣṇava saint returned to Nīlācala in 1512 A. D. after his visits to the countries of South India, it was found that hostilities had ceased.⁶⁵ But when he was coming back to Bengal about 1513 A. D., some approaches to this country were still closed. We also notice that Bengal coins of 919 A.H./1513 A. D. refer to Ḥussain's achievements in Kāmrūp and Orissa. From the *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* it is known that hostilities were renewed again in 1515 A. D. or 1516 A. D.,⁶⁶ a date also appearing on the kind of coins cited by us. The last date 1518 A. D. recorded on coins indicates perhaps the continuity of the strained relationship or just a reference to what happened in the past. The present writer has said, "Thus it seems fairly established that Bengal's war with Orissa continued throughout the reign of Ḥusain Shāh".⁶⁷ After what has been discussed above about the relationship between Bengal and Orissa, our observations seem almost literally correct. But A. Karim says : "...it is difficult to fix the date of his (Ḥusain's) Orissan campaigns. Except the *Mādī Pañjī* no other source supplies any date".⁶⁸ The view needs modification in the light of the literary and archaeological sources giving some details and dates analysed above. The gold coin of 1513 A. D. which A. Karim is willing to ignore, has perhaps some importance. At about 1510 A. D., Chhatrabhog marked the south-western boundary of Bengal; but by 1513 A. D. or 1514 A. D. the Bengal ruler had expanded his territories to include the bank of the river Mantreśvar, far away from Chhatrabhog⁶⁹. The Sultān seems to have celebrated the successful part of the

64. *History of Bengal*, p. 148, f. n. 3, *Husain Shahi Bengal*, pp. 49-50, S. Mukhopadhyaya : *op. cit.* p. 295 where it is stated that Caitanya went to Nīlācala in January, 1510 A. D.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 295.

66. *History of Bengal*, II, p. 148, f. n. 3; *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 52; S. Mukhopadhyaya *op. cit.*, 297-99

67. *Husain Shahi Bengal*, 52.

68. *J. A. S. P.*, XV, No. I, p. 8.

69. S. Mukhopadhyaya *op. cit.* p. 297 where the *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* and the *Caitanya-chandrodaya* has been cited.

whole story by issuing the gold coin in question which mentions the conquest of Kāmrūp and Kāmta also as an incident of the past. A. Karim and Simon Digby have wondered if it was at all possible for Husain to fight in two frontier regions when he had the necessity of opening yet another frontier on the West where Bengal soldiers stood face to face with those of Sikandar Lodī⁷⁰. Husain Shāh perhaps understood the strategical need of concluding a non-aggression pact with the Lodī ruler in 1495 only to be free to conduct expeditions against Kāmrūp and Orissa.

The earlier portions of this paper indicate that several inscriptions may help us in understanding Bengal history against a wider perspective, while the section in which I have refuted the views of several scholars, shows that certain recesses in our historiography still need more *son et lumière*. Although recent historiography is turning to be more and more sociological and economical in nature, we have hardly any reason to ignore the problems connected with expansion of kingdoms in the direction of water routes and mountainous defiles and land routes and which are likely to reveal significant aspects of a country's social and economic life.

70. J. A. S. P., XV, No. I, p. 3, S. Digby - B. S. O. A. S., *op. cit.* p. 597.

CALLIGRAPHY OF MUḤAMMAD ḤUSAIN KASHMĪRĪ

P. I. S. M. Rahman

The names and brief biographies of the most of the calligraphers who flourished in Mughal India are preserved in the *Tadhkira-i-Khushnawisān* and the *Risālah dar dhikr-i-Khushnawisān*. Both the works are most probably written by the same author. In *Tadhkirah-i-Khushnawisān* the author records his name as Maulānā Ghulām Muhammad *Haft Qalamī Dihlawī*. In the *Risālah dar dhikr-i-Khushnawisān* he signs his name as *Khalīfah Shaikh Ghulām Muhammad Haft Qalamī Akbar Shāhī*. From the similarities of the names of the authors, the dates of the composition and the contents of the works, it appears that the authors can hardly be two different persons.

Tadhkirah-i-Khushnawisān has been edited and published in the Bibliotheca Indica series by Dr. Hidāyat Ḥusain in 1910. But a fuller version of this work in manuscript is in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore, India.¹

The present study is mostly based on the *Risālah-dar dhikr-i-Khushnawisān*, a manuscript copy of which is preserved in the British Museum.²

The foundation of the Mughal school of calligraphy was laid down by Emperor Humāyūn after his return to India from Persia. More calligraphers came from Persia to join the service of Emperor Akbar. Indians with artistic talent also flocked in to his court.

Abū al-Faḍl says, "His Majesty shows much regard for the art and takes a great interest in the different systems (styles)

1. *Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Mss. of the Library*, Vol. XI, pp. 89-90.

2. British Museum MS. or. 1861.

of writing, hence the large number of skilful calligraphers. *Nasta'liq* has specially received a new impetus."³

Risālah-i-dar dhikr-i-Khushnawisān befittingly begins with the brief account of the life of Muhammad Husain Kashmīrī, the greatest *nasta'liq* calligrapher that India has produced. Abū al-Faḍl says, "The artist who in the shadow of the throne of His Majesty, has become a master of calligraphy, is Muhammad Husain of Kashmīr. He has been honoured with the title *Zarrīn Qalam*, the golden pen. He surpassed his master Maulānā 'Abd-al-'Azīz ; his—*Maddāt* and *dawā'ir*⁴ shows everywhere a proper proportion to each other, and art critics consider him equal to Mullā Mīr 'Alī"⁵. The specimens of his exquisite calligraphy that are still available in the various libraries of the world, testify to the verdict of his contemporary art critics.

The Bodleian Library at Oxford possesses two manuscripts⁶ entirely written by Muhammad Husain Kashmīrī in excellent *nasta'liq*. For the appreciation of the artistic beauty of the calligraphy of these two manuscripts one has to see them in their original form. The charms of the subtle rhythm and graceful movement of the lines and curves of the letters written in gold on the carefully prepared papers, have almost an hypnotic effect that can move one to tears. One is baffled to express what does bring in this effect. It seems the world would have been poorer without this indescribable beauty of calligraphy.

Eight calligraphic sheets, specimens of Muhammad Husain's calligraphy preserved in the Dārā Shikoh Album in the India Office Library, London, may be considered to show the gradual development of his style.

From the very beginning Muhammad Husain Kashmīrī seems to have been able to create an illusion of effortlessness in his handwriting. Strokes seem to flow from his hand in quick succession, almost without any consideration of the strict rules

3. *Ā'in-i Akbari*, Blochman's Translation Vol. I. Calcutta, 1873, p. 102

4. *Maddāt* means extensions of letters like *bā*, *fā*, etc. and *Dawā'ir* means curvature or circle of letters like *Nūn*.

5. *Ā'in-i Akbari* pp. 102-103.

6. Mss. Elliot, 254 and Elliot, 255a.

involved. This is the overall impression one receives looking at his calligraphy. But a careful consideration at once reveals that his constructions of such difficult letters as *dāl*, *waw*, *īā* etc. are extremely skilful. Life has been breathed into these letters by subtle twist, turn, movement and modulation.

As has been said, "The charm of a calligraphic writing is contained in the structure of the strokes and curves which aim at producing a graceful movement instinct with universal appeal."⁷ The specimens of Muhammad Husain's calligraphy show that he has been able to produce this "graceful movement instinct with universal appeal" by perfecting his *maddāt* and *dawā'ir*. But his construction of *alif*, as the first specimen of the Dārā Shikoh Album shows, is not always perfect. One has to remember the advice of Sultān 'Alī Mashhadī, "for an *alif* three movements are needed, although this does not come from the *qalam*."⁸

It is not that Muhammad Husain was incapable of producing "three movements" in an *alif*. But in the early specimens of his calligraphy he does not appear to have taken equal care of all the *alifs*.

In the second specimen of the Dārā Shikoh Album, Muhammad Husain in constructing *maddāt* and *dawā'ir* exhibits further improvement. In this specimen his 'ayn and *mīm* are superbly written. He does not appear to be satisfied with creating only one kind of perfect *ha*, *kha* and similar other letters in one *waslī*. In the present example the *kha* in the third line is different in shape from *che* of the fourth line. He has taken here more care to construct the *alifs*.

The third specimen of the Album is a masterpiece of *nasta'liq* style. The *maddāt* and *dawā'ir*, *mīm*, *kha*, 'ayn and *dāl*—all have been written with a sure and perfect hand.

At this point it may be useful to consider how Muhammad Husain Kashmīrī stands in comparison with the three most famous Persian calligraphers, Sultān 'Alī Mashhadī, Mīr 'Alī and Mīr

7. M Ziauddin *Moslem Calligraphy*, Calcutta 1936, p 49

8. Qādī Ahmad, *Calligraphers and Painters* Minorsky's translation, Washington, 1959, p 199

‘Imād It is extremely difficult to distinguish the *nasta’liq* and *Shikastah* styles of India from those of Persia. After all, the *nasta’liq* style originated in Persia and later on spread to India. Moreover, many famous calligraphers in Mughal India came from Persia. There had been a regular flow of calligraphers and their styles from Persia to India from the time of Humāyūn to that of Aurangzib and his successors. In fact the fabulous wealth and grandeur of the Mughal court attracted like a magnet the best artists from all over the Muslim world.

But the Indians were not slow in mastering the art of *nasta’liq* calligraphy. Many calligraphers of Indian origin were able to compete in excellence of their styles with the Persian experts. Moreover, the Persian masters who migrated to India, lived and developed their mature styles in India. So their styles belonged to India. For example, the great master, Aqā Rashīd, left Persia for good and lived, taught and developed his mature style in India. In fact, he contributed most to the development of *nasta’liq* calligraphy in India and influenced the entire course of its later development. So his style has more relevance to India than to Persia.

Sultān ‘Alī Mashhadī was the first great calligrapher of the *nasta’liq* style. Referring to the style of this master, his pupil, Mullā Mīr ‘Alī, said that judged by every tangible standard, it was inferior to his own, still it possessed a zest (*namakī*—saltiness) which he could never acquire⁹.

A comparative study of the calligraphic specimens of Sultān ‘Alī and Mīr ‘Alī reveals that the *dawā’ir* and *maddāt* of Mīr ‘Alī were more fluent, elegant and lively than those of Sultān ‘Alī. But in the construction of such letters as *alif*, *hā*, *rā*, *dāl* and *waw*, Mīr ‘Alī has hardly surpassed his master. On the whole the calligraphy of Mīr ‘Alī is more appealing than that of Sultān ‘Alī. But something, indescribable, perhaps a kind of lyricism, seems to be missing in Mīr ‘Alī’s calligraphy. Most probably this quality present in Sultān ‘Alī’s style was hinted at by Mīr ‘Alī as *namakī*.

9. *Loan Exhibitions of Antiquities*, Delhi Darbar, 1911, p. 65.

Mīr 'Alī is a classical master of calligraphy. He scrupulously followed the rules of construction and proportion of *nasta'liq* style. His style is in perfect harmony with the strict form and perfect beauty. He explored and exhausted all the potentialities of the *nasta'liq* style in accordance with the classical principles.

Muhammad Husain Kashmīrī equals Mīr 'Alī in the constructions of *maddāt* and *dawā'ir*. He appears even to have surpassed Mīr 'Alī in constructing the difficult letter, *dāl*. Looking at the *dāls* of Mīr 'Alī and Muhammad Husain side by side it appears that Muhammad Husain has managed to produce an extraordinary beauty in this letter by a subtle turn or twist of his *qalam*. But in overall effect, perhaps it was not possible for him to surpass Mīr 'Alī remaining within the strict principles of *nasta'liq* style.

Like all creative geniuses Muhammad Husain appears to have restless spirit. He could not remain satisfied just by equaling Mīr 'Alī. Perhaps he wanted to create something new that might catch the imagination of the people. Thanks to the magnificent patronage of the emperor Akbar, he was provided with enough material means to be able to experiment freely in the artistic field.

Coming after Mīr 'Alī, Mīr 'Imād, the third and perhaps the greatest of the Persian *nasta'liq* calligraphers, had to face a similar creative crisis. He could hardly expect to improve upon the style of Mīr 'Alī while remaining faithful to the strict principles of *nasta'liq* style. However hard he might try to modulate the *maddāt* and *dawā'ir*, to twist and turn the moving lines, he could not surpass Mīr 'Alī. So the restless genius of Mīr 'Imād attempted to create something new. Mīr 'Imād succeeded in his attempt in creating a kind of wavy movement which was new in *nasta'liq* style.¹⁰

It was neither the subtle lyricism of lines of Sultān 'Alī Mashhadī nor the perfect modulation of the *maddāt* and *dawā'ir* of Mīr 'Alī, but the restless wavy movements of the contours of all the letters that endowed the style of Mīr 'Imād with a magic charm. And because of this magic charm the calligraphy

¹⁰ *Album of Indian and Persian miniatures of the 16th and 17th centuries*, Moscow, 1962, plate, 6.

of Mīr 'Imād captured the imagination of all the contemporary connoisseurs of art. He also tried to create a new effect by writing the *ya* and *kaf* in an irregular way¹¹ Like Muhammad Husain, Mīr 'Imād also succeeded in creating an illusion of effortlessness in his art.

Muhammad Husain Kashmīrī attempted to overcome his creative problems in different ways. Beginning from the fourth specimen of the Dārā Shikoh Album one may notice his growing tendency to write *ya* by turning back its tail, though it is not a new feature in calligraphy. In this specimen he has constructed letters like *che*, *jum*, etc in different shapes in different places. This tendency may strike one as his carelessness in writing similar letters in a uniform shape. But in fact it seems to be his deliberate attempt to make the irregularities just to break the monotony of the rhythm of lines, if not anything else. There is one more tendency to be noticed here. This is the placing of the exquisite *dāl* above another letter as in the second and fourth lines. All these tendencies together make this specimen very different from others.

The fifth specimen of the Dārā Shikoh Album is a densely written piece of calligraphy. In the third line of this specimen '*kaf*' is not written in strict proportion of *nasta'liq* principle. In the second line the end of *nūn* is beautifully curled to replace the dot

Only a master who knows the rules of his art perfectly well is entitled to break the rules to create new forms of beauty. —
 — What appears to be negligence on the part of the calligrapher to pay equal attention to all the letters, is a skilful attempt at creating beauty going beyond the known principles.

In the sixth specimen of the Album further progress of his creative process is evident. The *maddāt* and *dawā'ir* of this specimen look almost as wavy as in the calligraphy of Mīr 'Imād. The tails of all terminal *yas* are elegantly turned back. This is indeed another masterpiece of Muhammad Husain's art.

The seventh specimen of the Album is perhaps meant to be a *mashq* in which he shows the various forms of the similar

11. *ibid*, plate III.

letters and the symmetrical arrangement of the letters with similar strokes. This specimen could be used by the students of calligraphy as a model of their *mashq* or exercise.

The eighth specimen of the Dārā Shikoh Album was written during the reign of Emperor Jahāngīr when Muhammad Husain must have been an old man. This specimen indicates that even in his old age he did not cease to experiment. The wavy movement of the *maddāt* and *dawā'ir*, the exquisite turning of the tails of the terminal *yas*, the determined modulation of the contours of all the letters—all appear to express a kind of youthful exuberance. Like the last poems of W. B. Yeats, this art of calligraphy of Muhammad Husain is the compact, powerful and mature expression of a deep human emotion and experience of a life-time. It marks a triumph of human struggle against the weakness and fatigue of old age and the threat of impending death.

Another specimen of Muhammad Husain's calligraphy written in Jahāngīr's time is preserved in the Album no. Or. 2787 in the British Museum. It represents a peak in Muhammad Husain's achievements in the formal regular *nasta'liq* style. A few more specimens of his calligraphy are also in the British Museum¹²

A copy of Sa'di's *Gulistan* in Muhammad Husain's magic handwriting is in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society, London¹³. More specimens of his superb calligraphy are in the Oriental Public Library, Bankipore, India,¹⁴ in the India Office Library, London,¹⁵ and in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.¹⁶

12. B. M. or 2787, or. 11, 911, Stowe or 16.

13. The Palaeography Society, *Facsimiles of manuscripts and inscriptions*, Oriental Series, London, 1875-1883, plate 69.

14. Catalogue of the Library, *op cit*, Vol. XI pp 92-93, 103, Vol I, p. 198.

15. Johnson Album Nos 7. 9. 56.

16. D. 391—1885.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

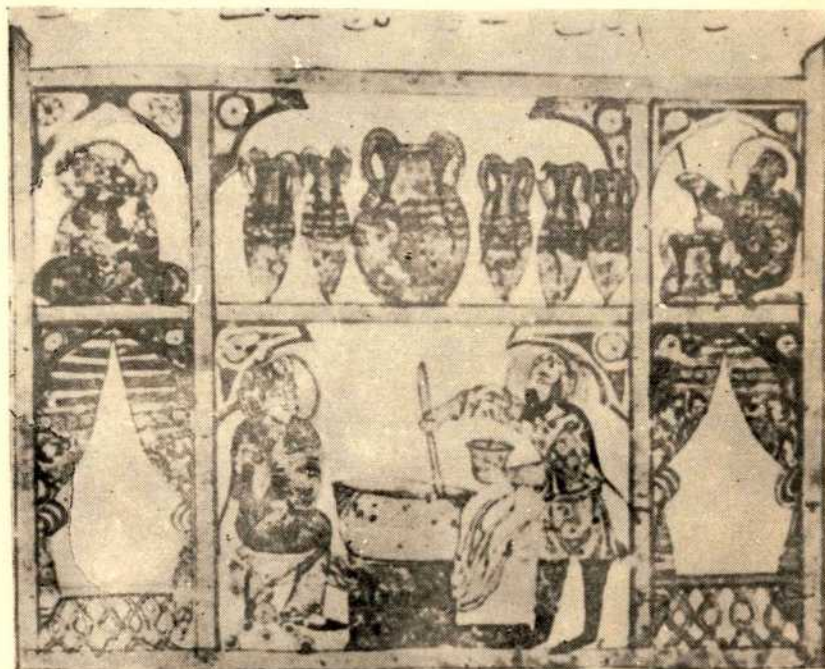


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

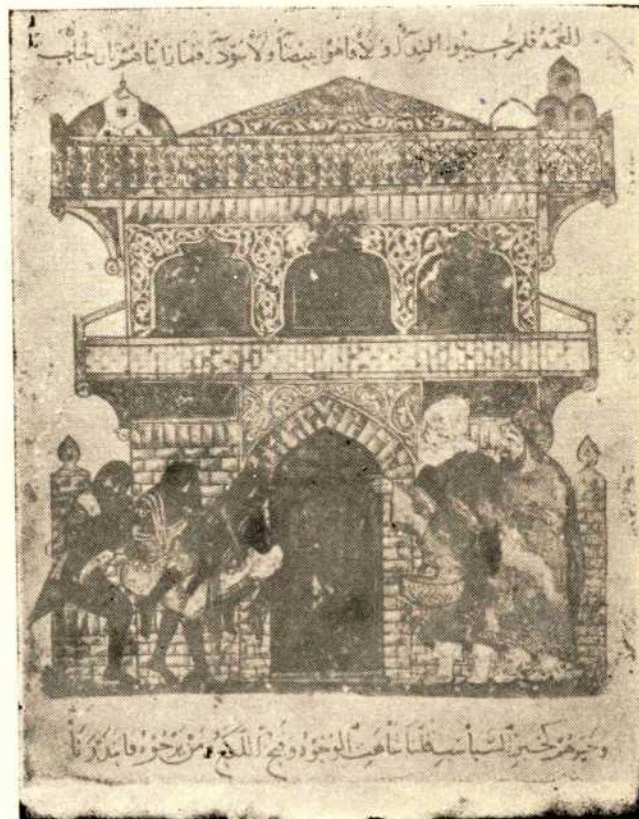


Fig. 7

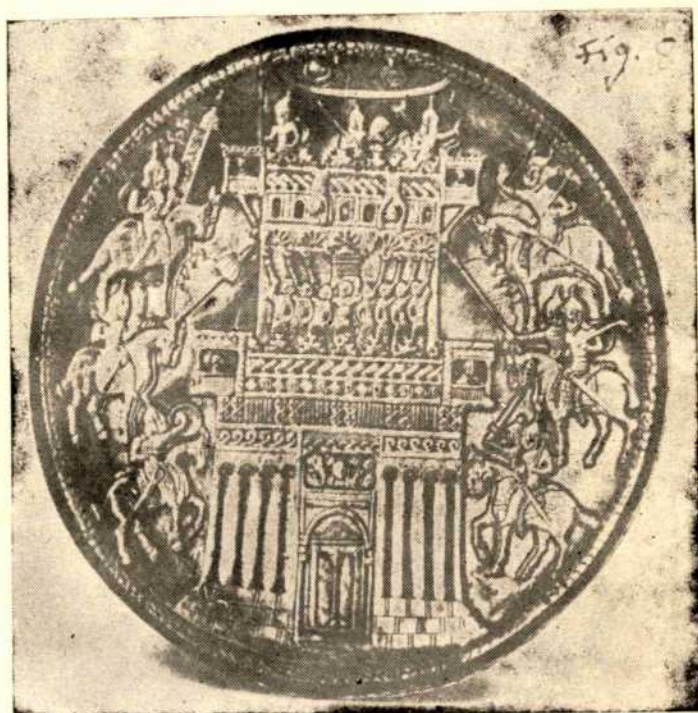


Fig. 8

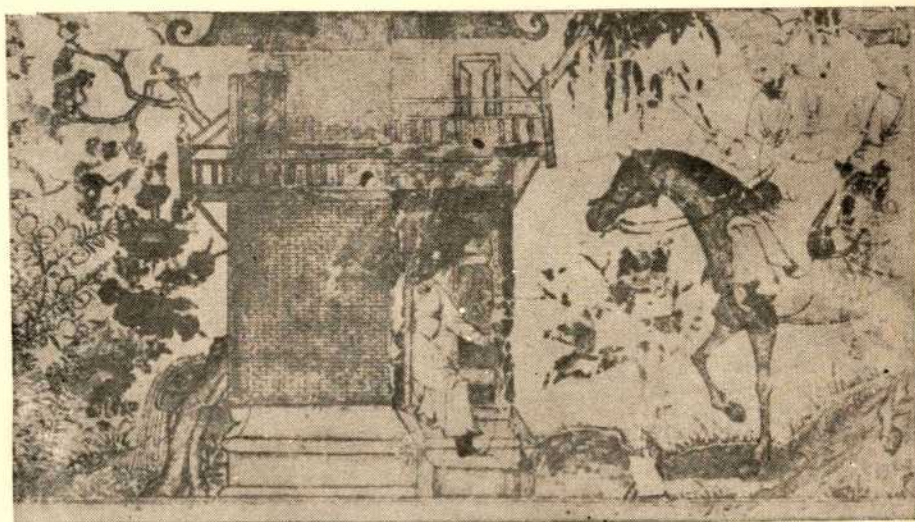


Fig. 9

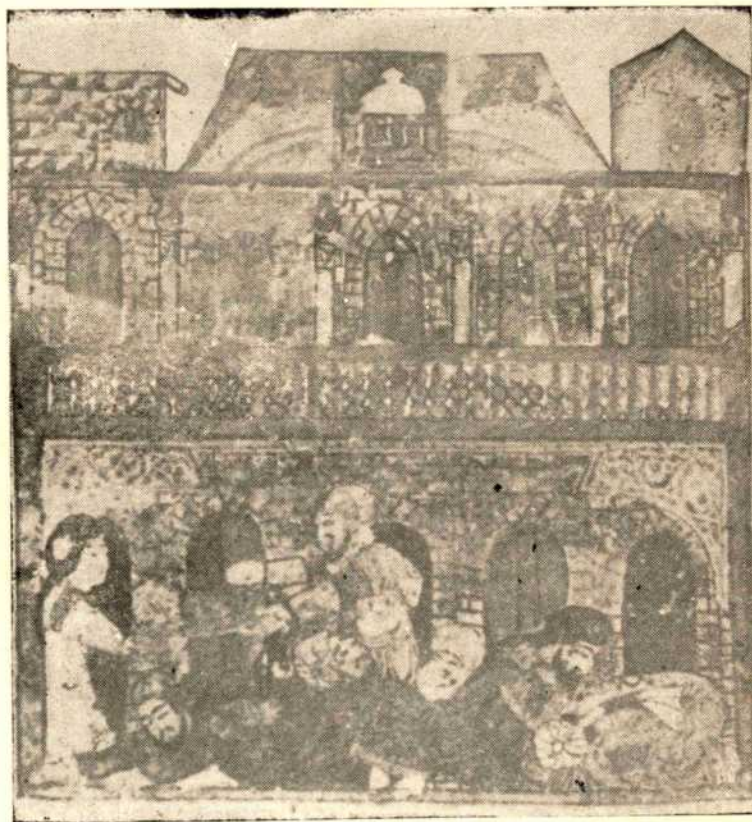


Fig. 10



Fig. 11

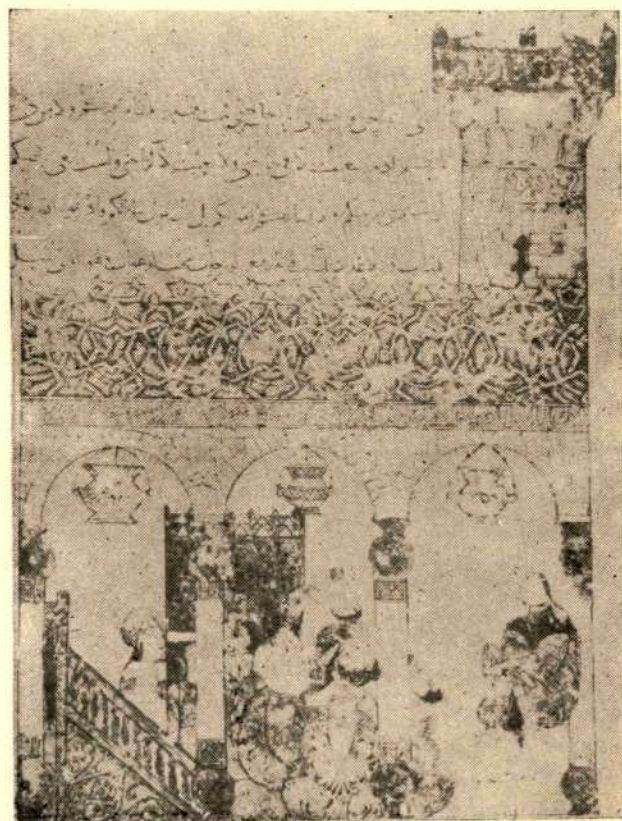


Fig. 12

**SOME ASPECTS OF THE ANGLO-ARAKANESSE RELATIONS,
1760-1785.**

RATAN LAL CHAKRABORTY

Chittagong had long been an appanage of the Arakanese¹ Crown, who from the middle of the 16th century, consolidated it as a frontier province against the Great Mughals.² Besides this alien power in the south-eastern frontier, there was the presence of the Maghs,³ who, in alliance with the portuguese pirates constituted a plundering party. They used to launch periodic raids against the people of coastal and riverine regions of Bengal and had almost paralysed the normal avocation of their lives.⁴ The Arakanese ascendancy in Chittagong was terminated since its conquest by Shaista Khan's General Buzurg Ummid Khan in

1, For a detail account of the ancient history of Arakan see, A. P. Phayre, 'On the history of Arakan', *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. 13 (1844), pp 23-52 : also Pamela, C. Gutman, 'Sources for the early history of Arakan', *Journal of the Bangladesh Itihas Samiti*, Vol. II (1973), pp. 93-101.

2. See S M. Ali, 'Arakan Rule in Chittagong', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Vol. XII, No. 3, (Dec. 1967), pp 333-51, Khondkar Mahbulul Karim, *The Provinces of Bihar and Bengal under Shahyahan*, (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1974), pp. 111-19

3 Although the Maghs were the inhabitants of Arakan, they were different from that of the Arakanese. From now on the Magh will mean as plunderer. For the terminological meaning see Ahmed Sharif, 'On Arakan and Arakanese', in A. B. M. Habibullah (ed), *Nahin Kanta Bhattachali Commemoration Volume*, (Dacca Museum, 1966), pp 358-60.

4 For details see J. N. Sarkar, 'The Feringhi pirates of Chatgaon', *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. III, N S, 1907, pp. 419-25, also Francois Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, (Delhi, 1968) p. 175.

1666,⁵ and henceforth Chittagong turned out to be the extreme south-eastern limit of the Mughal Empire. But the predatory activities of the Maghs continued almost unabated and subsequently the Dutch and the East India Company were destined to be the victims of their sporadic raids from the early days of their trade in Bengal.⁶

With the acquisition of Chittagong district as one of the 'Ceded districts'⁷ the East India Company came into close contact with the Arakanese and obviously they had to take a new attitude towards the Maghs as well as to the Arakanese, which in its trail opened up many problems in the south-eastern frontier of Bengal. This paper is designed to give an account of the East India Company's attitude toward the Magh pirates and the Arakanese during the period from the East India Company's acquisition of Chittagong in 1760 to the loss of Arakanese independence in 1785

As early as 1725, a Magh attack was reported on the English factory at Jugdia and the Company lost fifty per cent goods in the fight⁸ But in those oscillating days of the Company, they had little power to do anything against these Maghs. In 1758, the East India Company tried to equip itself with "some armed vessels to cruise and prevent the inroads of the Maghs who annually infest these parts in boats and do a great deal of damage by pillaging the villages and towns and plundering all boats and vessels that fall in their way".⁹ In 1760 the Company acquired

5. J. N. Sarkar (ed.), *The History of Bengal*, Vol. 2, (Dacca University, 1972), pp. 377-81, also James Wise, 'The Feringhees of Chittagong', *The Calcutta Review*, No. CV, (July, 1871).

6. Sukumar Bhattacharya, *The East India Company and the Economy of Bengal*, (London, 1954), p. 177.

7. The districts of Chittagong, Burdwan and Midnapur were ceded to the East India Company by Nawab Mir Qasim in 1760. For details see W. K. Firminger, *Historical Introduction to the Bengal portion of the Fifth Report*, (Indian Studies past & present, 1962), Cxiii — Cxv.

8. A. Karim, *Murshid Quli Khan and his times*, (Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1963), p. 58.

9. Letter to Court, 10 January, 1758, H. N. Sinha (ed.), *Fort William—India House Correspondence*, (Delhi, 1957) p. 278.

Chittagong district as one of the ceded territories and this event was followed by positive attempt of the Company to begin upon a relation with the Arakanese

The initiative came from Harry Verelst, the Chief of Chittagong, who considered the friendly relation with Arakan essential for the Company's interest. The manufacture and commerce of Chittagong at the time of Company's acquisition were in a state of decay. This was because of the frequent depredations of the Maghs and consequent insecurity of life and property of the people.¹⁰ Harry Verelst thought that a friendly relation with Arakan might bring peace and safety to the people of Chittagong and security to the Company's commerce.¹¹ So Verelst's motive in opening up a relation with Arakan was rather to stop the Magh raids and to ensure Company's revenue and trade in Chittagong region than to extend commerce to Arakan. Because, in opening up a trade with Arakan had disadvantages in that any trade transaction from Arakan either by land or water might increase the expense of imports, but the Company had no knowledge about the products that would be procured in return.¹² In spite of these difficulties, Harry Verelst had to express his desire of extending commerce to Arakan.

Accordingly, on February 16, 1761, Harry Verelst wrote to the King of Arakan, Thirithu, offering a proposal for mutual friendship.¹³ In regard to trade he assured the King that "whatever goods they may bring they shall have an immediate price for, and also the choice of many in return".¹⁴ Verelst's approach got favourable approval from the King of Arakan and for the first time a direct contact of the East India Company with Arakan

10 Mazharul Huq, *The East India Company's Land policy and Commerce in Bengal 1698-1784*, (Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1964), p. 86.

11 Letter from the Chief of Chittagong to the Council of Fort William, 16, February, 1761, *Bangladesh Secretariat Records*, (These records have been preserved at the Bangladesh Secretariat Record Room and from now on these records are to be abbreviated B.S. R.), Chittagong, Vol. 479, pp 8-16.

12. *Ibid*

13, *Ibid*

14. *Ibid*.

was in sight.¹⁵ In answer to Verelst's correspondence, the Arakan King sent a deputation with a message of his good-will and desired for a free and open communication between Bengal and Arakan.¹⁶ The Arakan King also requested the English Chief to clear the large tracts of dense forest that had divided Arakan from Chittagong.¹⁷ Most probably by this, the King meant to clean the hide-outs of his political miscreants that took shelter in these jungles and there are evidences in the later English records that the Arakanese were deserting their country because of the oppression of their King.¹⁸ Any way, as a gesture of friendship Verelst sent a gift for the Arakan King. The King was also assured that the jungle would soon be cleared up.¹⁹ Of course, Verelst had the policy of clearing up as much of waste lands as possible to extend cultivation and to increase the Company's revenue in Chittagong.²⁰ The tenor of correspondence indicated that a friendship based on mutual interest was going to be established. But such a possibility receded when the King's assurance of preventing the Magh depredations in the Company's territories proved to be of no serious consideration on his part.

Records show that the assurance given by the King of Arakan was pointless, because the Magh raids into the district of Chittagong continued almost unabated and moreover the raiders had extended their depredations in the maritime districts of Bengal.²¹ James Rennell's map of Bengal, published in 1783, indicated that

15 C W Gurner, 'Verelst in Chittagong', *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XXVII, 1924, p 15.

16. *Ibid*

17 Alamgir Muhammad Serajuddin, *The Revenue Administration of the East India Company in Chittagong*, (Chittagong University, 1971) pp. 21-22,

18. Letter from the Chief of Chittagong to the Council of Fort William, 17 November, 1775, *B. S. R. Chittagong*, Vol. 460, p. 129.

19 Alamgir Muhammad Serajuddin, *The Revenue Administration of Chittagong*, pp. 21-22.

20 Mazharul Huq, *The East India Company's Land policy*, p. 86.

21. Letter from the Collector of Chittagong to the Collector of Calcutta, 8, March, 1769, W.K. Firminger, *Bengal District Records*, (Calcutta, 1923), Chittagong, Vol. I, pt. 1, pp. 30-31.

the southern part of Bakerganj was depopulated on account of the Magh raids²² Even sometimes, along with the property, the Magh raiders carried the inhabitants from different parts of Bengal for sale as slaves In January 1769, James Reed, the Collector of Chittagong, wrote to the Chief of Dacca for some light boats to drive away the Maghs who "appeared in great numbers on this coast, and carry (sic) away the inhabitants daily from different parts"²³ As the Magh raids continued, the peoples deserted their habitations and in consequence the Company's revenue collection and salt manufacture were impeded.²⁴ The Company had tried to prevent the Magh incursions through establishing coastal guards and for that banksall, sloop and Magh boats were built²⁵

With a view to encountering the Maghs, the Company in 1777 empowered Charles Purline, the Chief of Dacca, to prepare an armament against the Maghs.²⁶ But it was of little effect in preventing their sporadic raids. Being displeased with these repeated incursions of the Maghs, the Company complained to the King of Arakan against his subjects on the ground of committing depredations into the Company's territories²⁷. The Company's Government desired that the Arakan King would "take immediate steps for the punishment of the offenders and the release of the people" who had been "forcibly carried away into his country together with their effects"²⁸ The British authority also asked assurance from the King of Arakan to the effect that no attempt of further raids

22. For details see James Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindoostan*, (London, 1783).

23. Letter from the Collector of Chittagong to the Chief of Dacca, 13, January, 1769, W K. Firminger, *Bengal District Records*, Chittagong, Vol. 1, pt II, p. 69.

24. Letter from the Chief of Chittagong to the Council of Fort William, 15 December, 1776, *B S R*, Chittagong Vol 462, p 11.

25. Letter from the Chief of Chittagong to the Head pilot, 15 March, 1775, *B S R*, Chittagong, Vol 460, p 20

26. Letter from the Chief of Chittagong to the Chief of Dacca, 4 January, 1777, *B S R*, Chittagong, vol 462, p 15.

27. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, (Calcutta, 1930, vol V, p. 74.

28. *Ibid*,

into the British territories would be made in future. In 1777, the new King Saudawimala, a usurper, had demanded the restitution of his rebel subjects, who took asylum into the British territories of Bengal.²⁹ The Arakan King also requested the British authority not to give any protection to the fugitives who had fled from Arakan immediately after his succession.³⁰ But, as the King did not comply with the Company's proposals and moreover avowed hostilities on the British subject, so his request could not find any favour with the Company.³¹

Arakanese settlement in Chittagong was not at all a new feature. Under the Mughal administration there was large scale Magh settlement, and it was so extensive that the settlers suffered from an annual capitation tax called '*Magh Jama*'³² During Verelst's Government this *Magh Jama* was abolished to encourage the Arakanese to settle down in Chittagong and to extent cultivation.³³ The immigration greatly increased particularly in the 1770s. In 1775, above 1800 Arakanese came to Barapolong for settlement owing to the oppression of their King³⁴ It was a part of the Company's land revenue policy in Chittagong to encourage the settlement of cultivators from outside, especially from Arakan. So, according to their established policy, the Company allowed the Arakanese to settle permanently in different *parganas* of Chittagong and in consequence of that friction between the two neighbours became inevitable.³⁵

But the Company's policy of Magh settlement into coastal areas of Chittagong and their attempt at establishing friendship with Arakan could not stop the Magh depredation. So being

29. *Ibid.*, p. 82

30. *Ibid.*, p. 84

31. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

32. '*Magh Jama*' was an annual capitation tax levied on each of the Maghs who came to reside in Chittagong.

33. Alamgir Muhammad Serajuddin, *The Revenue Administration of Chittagong*, p. 120.

34. Letter from the Chief of Chittagong to the Council of Fort William, 18 June, 1777, *B S R*, Chittagong, vol. 460, p. 129.

35. H J. S. Cotton, *Memorandum on the Revenue History of Chittagong*. (Calcutta, 1880), Appendix, V p. 226.

embarrassed, the Company was willing to adopt "a plan for making reprisal on the country of the Maghs, in the hope that, at all events, it would deter them, for a time, from repeating their invasions."³⁶

But such a drastic measure against Arakan was not taken, perhaps, in view of the Company's involvement in the wars in south India. During Warren Hastings' administration, attempts were made to repress the Maghs by the help of troops stationed at Dacca and Chittagong, with the assistance of armed boats from Dacca and a Cruiser on the coast of Arakan.³⁷ Warren Hastings had the intention of maintaining friendly relation with Arakan and he directed Francis Law, the Chief of Chittagong, to send men to Arakan with a view to investigate their local resources, people and politics. This direction was followed by a mission in 1777 to Arakan, but it received very ill-treatment from the King of Arakan.³⁸ Most probably the King of Arakan getting no assistance from the Company in apprehending his political fugitives and being suspicious looked at this mission with disfavour.³⁹ As a result, the mission failed to collect any correct information of Arakan.

But as a matter of fact, the successive changes in the ruling authority of Arakan and the political unrest therein did not give any opportunity to the British authority to keep their policy consistent towards Arakan. In Arakan, the King Saudawimalla, after forty days of his installation, was dethroned and Saudathaditha, the Lord of Ramree succeeded in 1777.⁴⁰ On this occasion, the Company again made an attempt by congratulating the new King and desiring to promote friendship with Arakan.⁴¹ The Company's Government requested the new King of Arakan for the immediate release of the British subjects, captured during the

36 Auber Peter, *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, (London, 1837), vol. I, p. 568.

37. *Ibid.*

38. For details see H J. S. Cotton, *Memorandum on Chittagong*, pp. 225-28.

39. *Ibid.*

40. G. E. Harvey, *History of Burma*, (London, 1967), p. 372.

41. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, vol. v. p. 84.

reign of the late King and to prevent the Maghs from committing depredations into the Company's territories in future.⁴²

The British authority assured the Arakan King that if their requests were fulfilled, the Company would "overlook everything that happened in the time of his predecessors" and the King would acquire the Company's friendship. As records show, the new King of Arakan agreed to the Company's proposals, and along with trade transactions he had desired a reduction in the duty levied on the articles of merchandise.⁴³ But subsequent records do not reflect any information on the economic and political relation between Arakan and British Bengal. It was because within a decade Arakan was annexed by her belligerent neighbour, Burma.

From the first quarter of the 18th century, the Arakanese were unhappy with rebellions, assassinations and usurpations. Their central Government was weak and having fallen a prey to adventurers failed to give its people peace and tranquility of their old days.⁴⁴ As a result, Arakan became the hotbed of politics to some self-seekers and in 1784, among the band of Lords, Lord Hari had requested the Burmese King to help them in ousting the existing Arakan King Thamada and to take over their distracted country.⁴⁵ This invitation facilitated the Burmese King Bodawpaya's principle of imperialism, who believed that continuous lawlessness in Arakan might encourage the intervention of either the British or the French.⁴⁶ So, this invitation found warm favour with Bodawpaya, whose army invaded Arakan in 1785, deposed its last King Thamada and reduced the status of Arakan to a province of Burma under a viceroy to be appointed by the Court of Ava.⁴⁷ The conquest of Arakan by the Burmese King was followed by a policy of cruel oppression on

42. *Ibid*

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 110 and 124.

44. M. S. Collis, 'The Strange Murder of King Thiri-Thandhamma', *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol. XII, (1933), p. 243

45. G. E. Harvey, *Burma*, pp. 148-49

46. Maung Htin Aung, *A History of Burma*, (London, 1967), p. 195.

47. Brian Harrison, *South - East Asia*, (Macmillan, 1967), pp. 177 - 78.

the innocent peoples of Arakan. In reaction thousands of Arakanese fled over the border into Chittagong to avoid persecution.⁴⁸ Compared to the miserable condition in Arakan, there was considerable peace and security in the Company's territory. Besides this Arakanese historic links with Chittagong also encouraged them to take refuge over here. The Company's Government gave no objection to such an exodus. Moreover, according to their traditional policy the Company "gave them land and allow (sic) them to settle down" to the southern part of Chittagong.⁴⁹ Because these tracts of lands were sparsely populated, so an increase in number was wanted.⁵⁰

The conquest of Arakan automatically brought an end to the possibility of direct Anglo-Arakanese relations and it produced a series of problem for the Company and in course of time these problems were held responsible for the Company's involvement in the war of south-eastern India. Unfortunately, the Arakanese settlements in Chittagong were along borders of Arakan and hence Chittagong became the safe refuge for the Arakanese insurgents, who made constant raids into Arakan in the hope of getting their independence back.⁵¹ As a result, the Burmese viceroy for Arakan made protests to the Company's Government against these misdoings and sometimes crossed the border to find out their political miscreants. As the Burmese troops crossed the river Naff, the inhabitants of that region deserted after their houses were destroyed and the Company feared that their revenue might be affected.⁵² Later the Company's salt manufacture in Chittagong

48. For details see Anil Chandra Banerjee, *The Eastern Frontier of India*, (Calcutta, 1934), pp. 56-62, also D G. E. Hall, *Burma*, (London, 1950), p. 94.

49. Letter from the Magistrate of Chittagong to the Governor-General in Council, 28 January, 1794, *B S R. Chittagong*, Vol 496, pp. 68-70.

50. B. R. Pearn, 'King Bering', *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol. XXIII, pt. I, (1933), p. 55.

51. J Stuart, 'Political History of the Extraordinary Events which led to the Burmese war', *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol XI, pt I, p. 114

52. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultation, 20 February, 1786, quoted in A Aspinall, 'English Relation with Burma in the time of Cornwallis and Shore', (1786-1798), *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XL, pt. II, (1930), p. 101.

was also alarmed for the troops movement and the continuous penetration of the Arakanese into the British territory became a crisis.⁵³ The conquest of Arakan placed Burma and Bengal on a common frontier and in consequence of Arakan issue their former relation deteriorated. The Arakan refugee problems and the rebellious activities of the Arakanese insurgents in Arakan later forced both the country to be involved in serious disputes, which in the long run became the main cause of the Anglo-Burmese war of 1824.

The East India Company, from the beginning of their supremacy in Bengal, met the challenge of the Maghs and with a view to prevent the Magh incursions they had tried to open up a communication with Arakan. But all their attempts went in vain due partly to their fabian policy and partly to the political unrest in Arakan, and not much transaction could be made. There were little development in the friendly atmosphere between Arakan and British Bengal, but the last chance went out of Company's depth when Arakan was annexed by Burma in 1785. Finally, in consequence of the annexation of Arakan, the dreadful attacks of the Maghs gradually reduced, probably when the Maghs could not procure any assistance and support from the Burmese Viceroy and while some of them took shelter into the British territory.

53. Letter from the Magistrate of Chittagong to the Captain Commanding at Chittagong, Political Consultation, No 13, 7 February, 1794, in M. Siddiq Khan, *papers on Anglo-Burmese History*, (unpublished Records, preserved at the Dacca University Library), Political Proceedings, Vol. I, p. 3.

MUSTAFA SAGIR¹ : A BRITISH-INDIAN SPY IN TURKEY

M. A. A KHAN

The relation between the Muslims of India and the people of Turkey had always been cordial. In spite of this cordiality, an unfortunate incident—the execution of Mustafa Sagir, an Indian spy took place. It was the British imperialist policy to destroy this cordial relationship and to make the two countries hostile to each other. The extensive movement in India during 1919-1923 in favour of Turkey and Mustafa Kamal Pasha and continuous pressure of the nationalist forces under Kamal were rendering the British policy towards Middle East quite ineffective. As a result, the British statesmen might have thought that Mustafa Kamal was the source of troubles and that if he could be removed, their calculated policy towards Turkey would be successful. Besides, India was then under British rule and the intense sympathy for Turkey was prevalent there. So the British Government chose a man from India so that in case of his being caught and hanged, the Britishers might be in a position to exploit the event (as they did later on) to suit their own political purpose.

By sending Mustafa Sagir to Turkey, the English wanted to stop contact between Mustafa Kamal and the Sheikh Sanussi²

1. Mustafa Sagir is said to be a man from Muradabad, Uttar Pradesh in India. His parents were Indians and his father's name was Zakaria. Mustafa Sagir worked in the British Consulate in Iran and then under Colonel Nelson in Istanbul. He knew English, German, French and Turkish well, *Hakimiyeti Milliye*, (a Turkish daily Newspaper) March 21, 1921.
2. The founder of the Sanussi order of Dervishes was an Algerian scholar Al-Sayyad Muhammad bin Ali al-Khattabi al-Idrisi al-Hasani. The head quarters of the Sanussi Dervishes was first at Jaghbug and then at Kufra in Lybia. The Sanussis took active part in the struggle for independence. Their gallant fighting and determination

of Lybia. The distribution of Atatürk's photograph in Arab dress in Syria, Egypt and Iraq was not liked by the English; the English did not want any unity between the Turkish might and other Islamic people either. There was in Ankara an Indian, named Abbas,³ who was the editor of an Urdu newspaper published by the Turkish war ministry. The sending of this paper to India created anti-British feeling in that country. The English did not like any unity among the Muslim countries nor the growth of anti-British sentiment in India.⁴

The English sent Mustafa Sagir to Ankara as a spy to kill Mustafa Kamal and to prevent Abbas from doing his work. In Ankara, Sagir stayed as a guest of 'Abbas. 'Abbas discovered that Mustafa Sagir worked late at night in writing letters which were given to him next morning for despatching. Out of curiosity, he opened a letter and found only one or two lines in it. This aroused his suspicion. He handed over the letter to Dr. Adnan Bey,⁵ the interior Minister. After examination, it was found that the letter was written in secret ink and was addressed to General Harrington.⁶ This led to Mustafa Sagir's arrest on March 21, 1921 with many other documents.⁷

brought to the Lybian nation their much desired independence. The third Sanussi leader was Sayyid Ahmed al-Sharif who resisted the French from 1902 to 1918 and from 1912 to 1918. He was directing the Sanussis against the Italians and the English. He died in 1933 at Medina in exile. During his absence his cousin Sayyid Idris led the Sanussis in Lybia

3. Abbas served the British army in Iraq during world War I. He refused to fight the Turks and fled from Iraq and went to Turkey where he was received cordially and was given a job in the Turkish Foreign Ministry. He also, served for some time as an interpreter of the Turkish Embassy in Kabul.
4. A. A. Khan. *The attitude of the Muslims of India towards the Nationalist Movement of Turkey (1919-1923)* (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation in Turkish) Ankara, 1970, p. 200.
5. Adnan Adiyev: Husband of famous Turkish writer Halida Edib. He took active part in the Turkish Liberation struggle and was later on appointed as interior Minister in the Kamalist Government.
6. Harrington was an English general. He landed at Chanak with a British contingent. He signed the Mudavira Armistice in October 1922.
7. This is what was told by Abbas to Jafer Hassan Aybak. The latter is an Indian still living in Istanbul. He was the Secretary of the

But Turkish historian and journalist Enver Behnan Sapolya⁸ has given us a story regarding Mustafa Sagir, altogether different from the above version. According to him, Mustafa Sagir, a young man of 32 years, was a man of high education and knew Turkish quite well. He used to roam in Istanbul freely to make friends. Once he was acquainted with Colak Sami Pasha, who was working in the Mım Mım⁹ group. Knowing this, the English arrested him and sent him to Igue island where he was trained as a spy. He went to Inebolu secretly and then to Anatolia as a Muslim of India. The Muslim of India supported and helped Turkey during their liberation struggle.¹⁰ For this, Mustafa Sagir was allowed to enter Anatolia without suspicion.

The ship which carried Sagir came to harbour at Inebolu. But there was an unprecedented storm in the Black Sea so that no boat could reach the ship. The name of the ship was *Bahri Jedid* (New Ocean). At last, a boatman, Ilyas captain by name, struggling with waves, succeeded in bringing Mustafa Sagir into his boat. He was made a guest in the house of Dilizade Vehbi Bey, a merchant and a member of the Society of Defence of Rights. The Naval Officer Hikmet Bey was present there. As Mustafa Sagir knew good Turkish and was a Muslim from India, a dinner was arranged in his honour. In his dinner speech Mustafa Sagir disclosed that he was an Indian Muslim; that he would bring money from India; that if necessary he would

Provisional Government for India in Kabul. The author of this paper met him while he was in Istanbul.

8. Enver Behnan Sapolya was born at Istanbul in 1900. He is one of the living historians and Journalists of the Republican period. He took active part in the liberation struggle. He is the author of a number of books.
9. Mım Mım Group (Milli Mudafa'a Groubu) or National Defence Organisation was working secretly in Istanbul to send patriots and arms from Istanbul to Ankara. The Code of this organisation was 'Nuh', the secret name of Kamal Pasha. The founder of the organisation was Fevzi Pasha Cakmak. Mustafa Kamal and Cavat Pasha had knowledge about it and later on it became a part of the Nationalist forces. It had branches all over Turkey.
10. The nationalist movement of Kamal Pasha is regarded by the Turks as Liberation Movement.

procure soldiers for Turkey from India, that Muslim children in India were keeping their names after Kamal in lieu of Enver Pasha and that he would go to Ankara to discuss these points with Mustafa Kamal Pasha.

After this, Mustafa Sagir went to Ankara and remained in the Hurriyet Hotel at Ulus. He was closely followed, for an intelligence inspector sent news of his being a spy. He wrote letters using chemical elements. Chemist Avni Refik Bekman was able to read the writings. Mustafa Sagir was arrested immediately by the Police Inspector Mohammed Bey,¹¹ who questioned him and his guilt of being a spy was proved¹²

But according to Lieutenant General Ekram Baydar, Mustafa Sagir was a Professor of Turkish in the Islamic Department of London University and went to Istanbul to transfer the help made by the Indian Muslims to Turkey. In Istanbul he established Turko-Indian Islamic Society and started giving help to the people. Later on, he went to Ankara and met Mustafa Kamal Pasha in his room in the Grand National Assembly building. He presented to Mustafa Kamal a decorated flag of the Indian Khilafat Committee and, wanted to know how Indian help of three million gold coins could be transferred to him. Mustafa Kamal advised him to discuss this with the interior Minister Adnan Adiver. Mustafa Sagir met the interior minister several times. In one of his meetings he disclosed that advice should be given to India for transferring the money to Turkey. And as there was no telegraph and postal line between Ankara and India, letters could not be sent. So proper advice should be given to Remiz Bey (Colonel Nelson), a member of the Turko-Indian Islamic Society living at Shialı in Istanbul. Mustafa Sagir gave the letters to Adnan Bey and requested him to send them to Remiz Bey. Adnan Bey entrusted Captain Aziz Khuda to examine the letters. The latter placed ammonium in between

11 Mehmet Bey was an inhabitant of Uskulu. He was patriotic and revolutionary. He worked in the Police Department. During the liberation war, he escaped from Istanbul to Ankara and became the first Director of Security Department of the Ankara Government.

12. Sapolyo E. B. S. *Mustafa Kemal Pasha ve Milli Mucadelenin alemi*, Istanbul, 1967 P. 30

the lines with brush and thus the plan of murdering Mustafa Kamal and of landing British plane to take back Mustafa Sagir after the plan materialised was exposed.¹³

Mustafa Sagir was tried on the charge of espionage by the Ankara Government. The trial began on May, 1 and continued from 11 to 23 May, 1921. Mustafa Sagir's plea was that he came to Ankara under British instructions to create an atmosphere of understanding between Turkey and Great Britain. On being asked whether Lord Curzon had given him any instructions, he answered "yes, in part"¹⁴ But *The Times* pointed out that he was an unbalanced person and went to Turkey as a sympathiser of the Turks. The British ambassador in a note to Angora Government demanded his release in accordance with the provisions of the London Treaty and threatened the Turkish Government with the consequences of a possible war in case of his execution. The note was signed by Agha Khan.¹⁵ No answer came from Ankara¹⁶ Agha Khan perhaps signed the note on

13. Colonel Ekram Baydar 'Mustafa Kemal in Gizlı Tesklatını ben idare ediyorum', *Cumhuriyet*, Oct. 25, 26, 1970.

14. *Islamic News*, London May 26, 1921.

15. The Agha Khan (1877-1957) is the hereditary spiritual head of the Nizari Ismailis and claimed descent from Fatima, daughter of the Prophet. Hassan Ali Sultan Sir Muhammad Shah or Agha Khan III succeeded to the title in 1885. His grand-father fled from Iran due to political intrigues. Conflict among the Khodas concerning the leadership of the imams led to law suits culminating in the famous judgement of Joseph Arnold in 1866 in favour of Agha Khan. He had been a leader of Muslim public and political opinion. He led historic Simla Deputation which demanded separate electorate for the Muslims of India. During the Balkan wars, the Ist World War, the Khilafat movement, he played an important role in favour of Turkey and himself contributed generously. But his letter to Ismet Pasha on the preservation of the Caliphate was misunderstood in Ankara because of its conflict with the National pact. He had been President of the Muslim League from 1909 — 1914. He represented India at the Disarmament Conference at Geneva in 1931. As President of the General Assembly of the League of Nations, he welcomed Egypt, Iraq, Turkey and other Muslim Nations into it. In 1918, he published *India in Transition* and in 1954 his *Memoirs*.

16. *The Times*, May 30, 1921.

the plea : "The pleasure that lies in forgiveness is not to be found in revenge",¹⁷ and he did not want any war between England and Turkey over the issue. Besides, in 1921 dispute arose between Ankara and London over the release of some English captives. The event could be serious. But Agha Khan arbitrated the case politely and secured the release of the captives. This success might have influenced Agha Khan to sign the letter.¹⁸

The documents caught showed that Mustafa Sagir was gathering information on these points : (1) Where did Kamal Pasha live ? (2) What was the speed of his motor car ? (3) What was the relation between the Bolsheviks and the Kamalists ? (4) Were the majority of the Parliament members for peace or war ?

The British Foreign office was behind Mustafa Sagir. The court gave the verdict that his intention was to overthrow the Kamalist movement by engineering assassinations and revolt.¹⁹ So after the trial, he was sentenced to death. Accordingly, the English spy Mustafa Sagir was hanged at Karaoglan Meydan²⁰ in Ankara at 4-30 A. M. on 24 May, 1921²¹

The execution of Mustafa Sagir by the Ankara Government was an insult to the British. It was an irony of fate that Mustafa Sagir was hanged on the very day when the King and all his subjects were celebrating the 'Empire Day'. The event was exploited by the British in India to arouse feelings against Mustafa Kamal. Appeal was made for fresh army from India and British fleet moved towards Izmir. The British were successful for the time being in misleading the people. The Hindu newspaper *Maratha* declared : "the execution of Mustafa Sagir has created a critical situation and wounded Muslim feeling. The Allies are on the point of war with Turkey".²²

17. *Paisa Akbar*, June, 1921.

18. *Political and Secret Department Records* Vol. 748-1916 : India Office, London.

19. *Islamic News*. May 26, 1921.

20. Kara Oglan Meydan is situated in Ankara at Ulus. Here many traitors of the liberation movement as well as those who opposed Kamal's reforms were hanged

21. *Hakimiyeti Milliye* : May 24, 1921

22. *The Maratha* : June 19, 12, 1921.

The Muslim newspaper *Al-Khalil* (Bijnor) declared that the prosecution documents showed that Mustafa Sagir was guilty of shameful conduct. It characterised him as a British spy and said that his execution by the Turks was quite justifiable.²³ *The Zulkarnain* of Badaun says that "it is a matter of shame for an Indian Musulman to have acted as spy and attempted to sow discord on the sacred soil of Turkey. Such traitors should accept christianity than to call themselves Musulmans and tarnish the fair name of Islam".²⁴

The unfortunate execution of Mustafa Sagir by the Ankara Government bade fair to convert a hopeful situation into a critical one. But Indian Muslims were not influenced by the British propaganda and declared that any hostile action on the part of England against Ankara would be regarded by them as hostility to Islam and that they would act accordingly. They also informed the Government that if England drew sword against Turkey, the balance of power would be overturned and the fire of Indian Muslim's anger would blaze forth with renewed vigour.²⁵ The Muslim leaders were also against this war move of the British. Moulana Mohammad Ali²⁶ and Moulana Abul Kalam Azad²⁸ warned the British of the possible consequence in

23. *Al-Khalil* June 12, 1921

24. *The Zulkarnain* : June 14, 1921.

25. *Guzrat Punch* . June 19, 1921.

26. *The Aj* (Bijnore) , June 20, 1921.

27. Moulana Mohammad Ali, a pioneer of the Khilafat movement and a dauntless fighter against foreign domination was a powerful orator and he possessed a powerful pen. He headed a movement for closer collaboration between Turkey and the Muslims of India. Born in 1878, he was educated at Aligarh and Oxford. He revolutionised Muslim thought by his writings in the *Comrade*, a weekly paper published by him. He was also a member of the Round Table Conference held in London where he uttered the Prophetic wish "I would prefer to die on the soil of a country which is free rather than return to a slave country". He died there in 1931

28. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), who later became Minister of Education and Scientific Research Government of India, played a leading role in the awakening of national consciousness among Indian Muslims through his Urdu Journal *Al-Hilal*, 1912 (suppressed by Government in 1914). He was interned by the British Govern-

case of war and added that the Indian Muslims would lay down their lives for the cause of Islam and Turkey²⁹

A note issued by Hakim Ajmal Khan³⁰ showed that the British were searching for a new pretext for friction with Turkey. If this was so, it could not but add to the misery of the Indian Muslims. Mustafa Sagir, an Indian Muslim who was reported to have been sent to Ankara by the Government of England as a spy, had been hanged by the Angora (modern Ankara) Government. No one could say that the Angora Government acted unjustly in putting this unfortunate person to death, if he was really caught while spying and if this guilt was proved. It was also impossible to believe that the Muslim Government of Ankara would ever sentence a Muslim to death unless his guilt was fully proved. The Indian Muslims respected the Ankara Government on account of some of their brave deeds. The invasion of Ankara by England would be considered by the Indian Muslims as adding insult to the injury and as a severe blow at the Khilafat. Ajmal Khan hoped that England would never take a hasty step.³¹ Moulana Abul Kalam Azad also warned the British in the same way when he said, "If England declares war against Kamal, it would be tantamount to a war against Islam, which would drive the Indian Muslims to a position not realised by the proud British Government".³²

ment in India during World War I. He was President of Indian National Congress, 1923 and 1939-46. His publications were *Al-Bayân* (Commentary on the Quran) 1915-16. *Tazkirah* (Autobiography) 1916. *Tar-jumân-ul-Quran* 2 Vols. 1933 and 1936. *Ghubar-i-Khatir* (letters), 1943 and *India Wins Freedom*.

29. *The Bombay Samachar*: June 22, 1921. *The Maratha* June 12, 1921 and *The Aj*, June 25, 1921.

30. Hakim Ajmal Khan, founder of the sub-continent's biggest College of Oriental medicine (Tibbia College), was one of the sponsors of the Muslim League in 1906. He was Chairman of the Reception Committee of the All India Muslim League Session held in Delhi in 1909 and later became its President. He took a prominent part in the Khilafat agitation of 1920-24.

31. *Insâf* June 24, 1921.

32. *Bharatbashi*: June 24, 1921.

Regarding the execution of Sagir, Moulana Azad declared : "he was one of those unfortunate Indian Mohammadans who sell their conscience and religion for the sake of a little worldly benefit".³³ *The Bombay Chronicle* disclosed the British machinations in the following manner, "The Nationalist executed Mustafa Sagir, a British Indian subject who went to Turkey to utilise the prestige of Indian Muslims to influence Turkish sentiment in favour of Britain. We have no knowledge of Mustafa Sagir whom the British seem anxious to set up as a *New Nurse Cavell* which is clear from English newspaper office telephone: Pile on Nurse Cavell for recruiting purposes".³⁴ This proved the machinations of the British.

From this incident, the British wanted to have some pretexts for war with Turkey which was impossible without Indian support. But the Indian Muslim's opinion definitely expressed itself against any British adventure in Anatolia and Mustafa Kamal.³⁵ The Indian Muslims held the view that there were still British threats against the Government of Kamal Pasha, a situation which they would not tolerate. This adamant attitude of the Indian Muslims helped Turkey in averting another war with the allies specially England.

33. *The Islamic News* . London, July 24, 1921.

34. *The Bombay Chronicle* June 7, 1921.

35. *The Sind Observer* . June 23, 1921.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN A BANGLADESH VILLAGE

ANWARULLAH CHOWDHURY

I

In this paper, I shall first describe the stratification pattern of Meherpur, a large village of Bikrampur *pargana* in the district of Dacca.

Meherpur is an ancient village. It is situated about 25 miles from Dacca, to its south-west. Waterways are practically the only means of communication to and from Meherpur. It is connected with Dacca city by launch services. A number of launches ply from Dacca to Meherpur every day. It is the second last stoppage on the Dacca-Srinagar launch route and it takes about four hours to reach Meherpur from Dacca.

The village is situated just on the bank of the WAPDA¹ canal which runs all along its western side. From this canal two separate streams enter the village, then join together near the village market, and the combined stream then flows towards the east. These streams do not run straight. Their meandering course divides the village into a number of *paras* (wards). An unmetalled road, a mile in length connects the village with Srinagar. Meherpur belongs to Srinagar thana which is a part of a vast low lying area of Dacca district surrounded by rivers and canals.

The river Padma flows seven miles south-west of the village. During the rainy season, the water of the Padma and the Dhaleswari enters the village through the WAPDA canal. The village

1. WAPDA is the abbreviation of "Water And Power Development Authority" It was an autonomous organisation and used to deal with water and power development in the country. This canal was named after this organisation.

is then inundated by water like all other neighbouring villages. Paddy and jute fields go under water. Every house looks like an island. The village looks like a vast expanse of water with a few huts rising here and there precariously above the floods which threaten to engulf them. Houses are flooded fully or partly. During the height of inundation, no land can be seen, and travelling has to be done by boat only. The *Koshas* (small boats) are then the only means of communication from one house to another.

The village market is situated in the centre of the village. There are thirty two shops in the village market, and there is a tin-shed fish-market adjacent to it. The shops remain open during day all time on-week-days. The sellers of vegetables and other essential commodities sit with their commodities on both sides of the road inside the market every morning. The fish market meets both in the morning and in the afternoon. There are no weekly markets.

People are seen taking tea inside and outside the tea shops and sweet shops of the village market, and discussing politics and other problems. Those who are directly involved in village politics are seen in the village market at least once a day sitting in the tea shops with their prominent supporters.

We have followed the method of intensive fieldwork, or in other words, anthropological method, in our present study. The anthropological method, which involves direct participation and observation in the field seems to us the most useful method for the study of village communities in contemporary Bangladesh. Because we think we can gain insights into the society and culture of the people whom we are investigating through intensive fieldwork.

I have done fieldwork in Meherpur in two phases, covering a total period of ten and a half months, for the purpose of present research. I lived in Meherpur from the beginning of April to the middle of November, 1973 and again from March to May, 1974. During my stay in Meherpur, I was accommodated in the house of one of its residents who lived in the same house with his family. I used to sleep in the *banglo-ghar* (outer room) of his house. The house in which I was accommodated belonged

to a *Khandan* Muslim landowner in Kazipara. I was taking my food with them. Food was served to me sometimes, by their servant boy and sometimes by male members of the family in the *banglo-ghar* where I used to sleep. I never saw the adult female members, specially the housewife who used to maintain strict *purdha* (seclusion) in my presence as I was an outsider.

This is the first time that an outsider lived in Meherpur for a long period of time, except some of the teachers of Meherpur High School who were also outsiders to the villagers. It should be mentioned here that I stayed with some teachers of Meherpur High School in the boarding house of the School for a fortnight when I first arrived in the village, and later I shifted to the house mentioned above where I spent the remaining ten months in two phases. It is perhaps because of this that I was first identified as a teacher of Meherpur High School by the villagers. But soon afterwards many villagers suspected me to be an agent of the Government trying to assess the land of the individuals to impose taxes accordingly. Many villagers thought me to be an agent of some relief organizations trying to make assessment of the requirements of relief needed by the villagers. Subsequently, though many villagers were convinced of my academic intention, many among the fishermen, blacksmiths, carpenters, sharecroppers and landless labourers still viewed me as one who had some connection with the procurement and distribution of relief. I faced difficulties while I was conducting a household census in the village even after four months of my arrival in it, because their discussions with me were governed by their assumption that I could collect relief materials for them. In the long run, these people were also convinced of my academic intention and helped me in my work.

But the greatest difficulty I had to face in the field was due to the fact that I did not know how to ply a boat. Out of the total ten and a half months of my stay in Meherpur, the village remained under flood water for five months (from the middle of June to the middle of November, 1973). It took me about a month to learn to ply a boat tolerably.

Though I had access to all sections of the village population irrespective of caste and status, I feel that my stay in the house

of a *Khandan* landowning Muslim belonging to Kazipara was somewhat disadvantageous for me for investigating especially the life of low status Muslims and scheduled caste Hindus. I could possibly have gained more insights into their social life if I had not stayed in Kazipara and in the house of a *Khandan* Muslim landowner. It is true that the scheduled caste Hindus and low status Muslims of the village had trust in me and they were convinced of my academic intention. Even then, I felt that they were maintaining some sort of social distance, identifying me as a *Khandan* Muslim. Had it not been so, I think my data about them would have been richer and more interesting.

The village had a population of 2,482 when I conducted a census in July and August, 1973. I have excluded from the census some of the Government officials resident in the village who occasionally come to the village, because in general they live apart from the main currents of social life within it. The total number of households in the village is 392. The average size of the household is 6.3. Of the total population, 1299 are males and 1183 are females : 729 (about 29%) are literate and 1753 (about 71%) are illiterate.

Agriculture is the dominant element in the economy of the village. The village is flooded in every monsoon by river waters, and every year new silt is deposited which makes the land fertile. This high fertility of the soil is suitable for agriculture. The village has large agricultural fields which are scattered throughout it. Paddy and jute are the main agricultural products of the village.

II

Meherpur is stratified from three dimensions ; namely, class, status and power. The first dimension along which the village is stratified is class. The agricultural population of the village can be classified into three classes, on the basis of ownership and non-ownership of the means of production, and their position in the organisation of production. As the principal means of production in the village is land, the classes in Meherpur are based on the basis of ownership and non-ownership of land. The three agrarian classes are, therefore, (1) landowners, (2)

sharecroppers and (3) landless labourers. These three classes occupy three different positions in the organisation of production.

There are two kinds of landowners in the village. The first group of the landowners may be called rentiers, as they live on the rents without contributing any labour to the agricultural process. They lease out their land to the sharecroppers and share half of the crops produced in those lands. Some of them supervise agricultural work and some of them even do not supervise it. This group of landowners does not invest any capital for production. The sharecroppers invest all capital which are required for production in the land leased out to him. The rentiers only make payment of annual land revenue payable to the Government.

The other group of landowners may be called owner cultivators. They own land and work on land either directly or indirectly. The owner cultivator contributes his labour in the process of cultivation either by directly participating in it or through supervision. They also invest in the productive process. Seeds, plough, fertilizers and other implements of agriculture were supplied by them.

The old landowning class of Meherpur have declined today. The two factors mainly responsible for this are (1) the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 and (2) the abolition of the *zamindari* system in 1950. The gradual disintegration of the old landowning class does not mean that the land system of the village has undergone major changes. They were replaced by new landowning class. Some rearrangements took place in the village in course of the last two decades. Those who migrated from the village were replaced by new settlers from surrounding villages.

The bulk of the population of Meherpur were landlords even during the time of British rule. Many families of Meherpur who were mostly Hindus received education at that time. A good number of educated people of Meherpur were employed in the Government of British India. This was the reason why many families left the village home and settled in the city specially in the city of Calcutta even much before the partition of 1947. Many of them migrated to India after the partition.

The abolition of *zamindari* system in 1950 was responsible for their total migration to India, as they lost rent receiving.

interest as a result of this new land reform by the then East Bengal Legislative Assembly. At the time of migration, most of these families sold their landed property. These lands were purchased either by the Hindu traders of the village or by the newly educated and wealthy Muslim families of the village and by the rising Muslim traders of the neighbouring villages. Some of these families, while migrating to India, appointed caretakers to look after their home and other belongings, some left them to the care of relatives. The houses of these families are still seen in the village in dilapidated conditions. In some cases, caretakers and relatives have become the owners of these houses, and in some cases, these have been sold to relatives and friends at a nominal price.

The two biggest landowners of Meherpur today are two Hindu families who have grocery shops in Meherpur market. All the shopkeepers are now landowners.

The Muslim landowners who were mostly uneducated or little educated, diverted their attention to education and felt the necessity of it most, when they were deprived of their rent receiving rights by the *Zamindari* Abolition Act of 1950. They now began to send their sons and daughters to schools and colleges. The expenditure on education is an economic burden on them. Moreover, they were to incur heavy expenditure on the occasion of marriage of their sons and daughters. To bear such expenditures, many of them had to sell a portion of their land. Some of them lost all their lands in this process. Some of them settled in Dacca city for getting opportunities of education and jobs and other amenities of urban life. To maintain such expenditure, they had to sell out their agricultural land in the village. The land of many old landowners was divided and subdivided among their children and grandchildren according to the Muslim law of Inheritance. In this way, many of them became poorer. Some of them even sold the small inherited holding for their very existence.

Some cultivators have purchased land sold by the old landowners during the last two decades. There are about twenty Muslim families in the village, the male members of which received college and university education after the partition of

1947. They are now either serving in the Government and in autonomous organisation or are engaged in trade. These families were also able to purchase a good amount of land from the old landowning class and from the Hindus who migrated to India. They are the new landowners of the village. So the present landowning class of Meherpur is the mixture of the old and new landowners.

The Sharecroppers stand in the middle of the class hierarchy in Meherpur. A sharecropper is responsible for supplying all requirements in connection with production on the lands, he takes on lease such as labour, seeds, fertilizers etc. The terms of lease are very simple as done on verbal agreements usually for one year but may be extended beyond that period. As a consequence, the tenancy is changed almost every year, but in some cases, may continue for years together.

The practice of subletting is almost absent in this village as the lands are leased out directly from owners to sharecroppers. The sharecroppers are mostly owner-cultivators having their own bullocks and plough. They themselves work in the field occasionally helped by hired labours as in times of sowing and harvesting. In case where the sharecropper does not own any bullock or plough, he prepares the land for cultivation with the labour hired usually on daily basis. There are some 100 landless labourers confined in about 50 households in the village. But the exact number of landless labourers may far exceed the number cited above owing to the fact that many households consist of more than one labourer. They do not own any land, but mostly engaged in agricultural work.

One fundamental difference between these landless labourers and the sharecroppers is that the former seldom gets any plot of land on lease as does the latter. Because the landowners very much doubt the capability of investment of these landless labourers. So these labourers are more often than not employed as day labourer instead of sharecroppers. Even this employment is not permanent or secure but subject to opportunity of work depending upon the seasonal variation in agriculture.

The mode of engagement of these landless labourers usually follows two ways :- In some cases, these labourers (locally

knows as *kamlas*) seek out the houses of landowners and sharecroppers for works. In other cases, they assemble in the village market with their tools and implements awaiting someone to buy their labour. As mentioned earlier, in sowing or harvesting season, the works are plenty and readily available to these labourers. Sometimes, the village requires hired labourers from outside to cope with the pressure of agricultural work, particularly at the time of jute harvesting.

We have already noted that the engagement of the landless labourers of Meherpur is on daily wage basis. The rate of wage, however, varies correspondingly with the pressure of agricultural work. It may be taka 4.00 to 5.00 with a mid-day meal in dull season or it may be as high as taka 8.00 with or without mid-day meal in busy season². The system of payment to labourers in Meherpur differs a bit from other places in the sense that there the payment is meted out once or twice weekly (usually on *Hat-day*) But here in Meherpur, the payment is made on daily basis.

In general, the labourers live on subsistence level for they do not invest nor they have ability to invest anything on the land they work. They have even a very few agricultural implements such as sickles (*Kachi*) or hoe (*Nirani*) of their own.

So, in Meherpur village, production is organized mainly through tenancy and wage labour. As a consequence, the class structure follows the production pattern culminating into mainly three classes of people viz landowners, sharecroppers and landless labourers which we already have discussed above.

III

The village is again stratified on the basis of status and caste. Meherpur is inhabited by two major religious groups; namely—Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims of the village are stratified as high and low status and the Hindus are ranked as high, low and scheduled castes.

2. This was the picture while the author was doing fieldwork in Meherpur in 1973. The situation may have significantly changed meanwhile.

The social hierarchy among the Muslims of Meherpur does not follow the Hindu caste pattern. The Hindu caste system in Meherpur is primarily based on the concept of ritual purity and pollution sanctioned by Hindu religion. But the Muslims of the village are not stratified on the basis of ritual purity and pollution. They are stratified mainly on the basis of traditional ownership and control of land, wealth, education and on the differences in the style of life.

Even in the Hindu dominated Indian society, the social hierarchy among the Muslims is not like the Hindu caste pattern. Though stratification among the Muslims in India is comparable with the Hindu caste system, there are also important differences. Caste exists among Indian Muslims, but it is not like that of the Hindus, because some of the characteristics of caste are not found among the Muslims. Nevertheless, caste among the Muslims in India has been directly influenced by the Hindu caste system.³ But in the Muslim dominated Bangladesh social stratification among the Muslims is not influenced by the Hindu caste system.

Let us discuss the present pattern of ranking among the Muslims of Meherpur on the basis of status. We have already mentioned that the Muslims of Meherpur are ranked as high and low in status. The high status Muslims of Meherpur are known as *Khandan* and low status Muslims as *girhastas*. This is, of course, a broad classification. Each of these categories is again sub-divided into a number of groups.

The *khandans* of Meherpur include all those who have the patronymics of Kazi, Gazi, Bhuiya, Chowdhury and Mia. These patronymics are used either before or after their names and they are hereditary. If anyone is born in a Kazi family, he will be known as Kazi, even from his childhood. So is the case with all other groups of the *khandans*.

The *girhastas* of Meherpur include all those who are directly engaged in agricultural work, whether they are owner cultivators or sharecroppers. A *girhasta* is one who owns and cultivates land and one who takes lease of other's land and works on land.

3. See for example Ahmed, Imtiaz (Ed.)—*Caste and Social Stratification among the Muslims*. Manohar Book Service. Delhi, 1973.

for production. Almost all of them are uneducated. Besides the *girhastas* there are two occupational groups of Muslims in Meherpur who are also considered as low status Muslims. They are the *Jolas* and *Baddis*. *Jolas* are traditionally weavers. *Baddis* are traditionally village eye-surgeons.

As we have already pointed out that the status ranking among the Muslims of Meherpur is based on the traditional land ownership and land control, we find that the *khandans* are landowners and the *girhastas* are either landowning cultivators or sharecroppers.

Table 1
Population of Meherpur by Religion and Caste

Muslims

Status groups	Number of Household	Number of persons	Average size of Household
Khandans	60	383	6.3
Girhastas	81	514	6.4
Kamlas	45	300	6.6
Jolas	3	25	8.3
Baddis	3	24	8.0
TOTAL	192	1246	6.4

Hindus

Caste groups	Number of Households	Number of Persons	Average size of Household
Upper Caste	20	125	6.2
Lower Caste	67	442	6.5
Scheduled Caste	110	657	5.9
TOTAL	197	1224	6.2

Christians

Sect	Number of Households	Number of Persons	Average size of Household
Catholic	3	12	4 0.
TOTAL	3	12	4.0.

This is, of course, a broad and general classification and there is overlapping in both the cases. There are some families among the *khandans* who do not own any land, though previously they were landowners. They have sold out their land in course of time. Some of them live on charity. Even then they are considered as *khandans*. Again, some of the *girhastas* families own land. Still they are considered as low status because their ownership of land is of very recent origin.

The *khandan* are landowners of the village. They trace their *khandani* to the ownership and control of land from an early stage. In fact, they were the intermediary groups who used to collect land revenues even during the British rule. They were entitled to enjoy a portion of land revenue collected by them.

The old status acquired through land control and their new status acquired through education and a particular style of life followed by them decide their position in the status hierarchy of Meherpur. A *khandan* is he who is long associated with ownership and control of land and has at least some education and who can be distinguished from the *girhastas* and *kamlas* by a particular style of life.

The *girhastas* are neither old landowners nor educated. They do not have any tradition of land ownership and land control. They have also not entered into schools and colleges. The *girhasta* landowners are recent landowners. They purchased land when the *khandans* began to sell out their land in the recent past. They could not purchase *khandani* by purchasing land. Moreover, there are only a few landowners among the *girhastas*. By and large they are sharecroppers. Therefore, economic class and social status groups are almost identical in Meherpur.

and it is possible to establish certain correlation between the two.

There cannot be any marital relations between the *khandans* and *girhastas*. There is not a single case of intermarriage between a *khandan* and *girhasta* in the known history of Meherpur. Besides the lack of marital relations between the *khandans* and *girhastas*, there are a number of informal endogamous groups both among the *khandans* and *girhastas*.

Khandans do not work in the field. They never plough the land and reap the crops. Many of them go to the field only to supervise the work of their tenants or sharecroppers. They never do any manual work. The *khandan* women never go to the fields. Many *khandan* families appoint servants from among the *girhasta* families for domestic as well as agricultural work. Both males and females of the *girhasta* families do manual labour. The *girhasta* women sometimes even work in the fields. The women of *chhoto girhasta* and landless labourer families also work in the *khandan* families on daily or monthly basis.

The *khandans* are divided into three major groups and this division is hierarchical. The *khandan* groups are (1) Kazis, Gazis and Bhuiyas, (2) Chowdhurys and (3) Mias. All of them have separate identities.

Like the *khandans*, the *girhastas* are also divided into hierarchical groups. They are *baro* (big) *girhastas* and *chhoto* (small) *girhastas*. The *kamlas* are considered inferior to the *girhastas*.

Inequality in income and possession of land is responsible for the differences among the *girhasta* Muslims of Meherpur. Even though there is inequality in the income of *baro girhastas*, *chhoto girhastas* and *kamlas*, there can be intermarriages between them. But a *baro girhasta* always gives preference to his group in the selection of bride or bridegroom.

There are three *Jola* and three *Baddi* families in Meherpur, who are also considered as low status Muslims. The traditional occupation of the *Jolas* is weaving. They do not own land. All the three weaving families have looms. The *Jolas* were endogamous and isolated from the rest of the Muslims of

Meherpur even a few years ago. But now they are permitted to establish marital relation with the *kamlas* and *girhastas*.

Because of the large scale migration of upper caste Hindus, the Hindu society of Meherpur lost its guardians. They were the vanguard of maintaining social distance among the Hindus. Before their migration to India in 1947 and even earlier, they used to maintain the structural distance between the different castes living in Meherpur. As Srinivas has rightly observed, "the elders of the dominant caste in a village were the watchdogs of a pluralistic culture and value system. Traditionally, they prevented the members of a caste from taking over the hereditary occupation of another caste whose interests would have been but by an inroad made into their monopoly, the only exceptions being agriculture... The dominant castes, then, maintained the structural distance between the different castes living within their jurisdiction".⁴ But today, in the absence of such a caste in Meherpur, the caste rigidity is not that rigorous as it was before 1947 when upper caste Hindus of Meherpur did not allow interdining and inter-mixing among different castes. Interdining and inter-mixing are fairly common to-day.

In Meherpur to-day, Hindus can be broadly divided into three categories ; namely, (1) the upper caste Hindus, (2) the lower caste Hindus and (3) the scheduled caste Hindus. The division is hierarchical, based on the concept of purity and pollution and sanctioned by Hindu religion. Birth determines the position of an individual in the Hindu society of Meherpur

The lower caste Hindus are again divided into many caste subdivisions. The scheduled caste Hindus are also divided into a number of caste subdivisions on the basis of superiority and inferiority.

There are four Brahmin households and sixteen *Kaistha* households who are considered as upper caste Hindus in the caste hierarchy of Meherpur. All the four Brahmins belong to a single endogamous group. There cannot be any intermarriage between the Brahmins and the *Kaisthas* of Meherpur.

⁴ Srinivas M. N.— *Social Change in Modern India* Berkeley and Los Angeles University of California Press. pp 15-17.

The lower caste Hindus of Meherpur are *Sudras*. They are divided into many caste subdivisions ; such as *sau* (trader), *dhopa* (washerman), *napit* (barber), *kumar* (potter), *goalas* (milkman), and *malı* (sweeper). All these subdivisions are called by a *title* or a patronymic. For example, the washermen are called *paul* and the potters *Rudrapaul*. The barbers are called *Sıl* and sweepers *Malakar*. All the milkmen are called *Ghosh*. Besides, there are two families who are called *Gop*. They are engaged in milk business. The traders are called *Sahas*. All these groups are endogamous.

Jele (fishermen) *Kamar* (blacksmiths) and *Sutar* (carpenters) belong to the scheduled castes in Meherpur. The fishermen are divided into two endogamous groups. One group is known as *Das* fishermen and the other as *Rajbansi* fishermen. All the blacksmiths are called *Suter* or *Sutradar*. The blacksmiths belong to a single endogamous group and the carpenters belong to another single endogamous group.

The castes are strictly endogamous. The only case of inter-marriage which was going to take place in the village did not materialize. The incident was the result of a love affair which developed between the son of a fisherman and the daughter of a wealthy trader who were secretly engaged to marry. On a day in the first week of April, 1974, they were supposed to elope from the village. But the guardians of the girl got the information just a day before the incident was to happen. On that night, while the boy was passing through a village lane, a guardian of the girl called him to their house and he was beaten so severely that he fainted. They immediately informed the police about the incident and lodged a case with the police saying that the boy came to their house for committing theft. Next morning, they spread word that the boy was beaten by them when he entered their house for committing theft. The boy was handed over to the police but he was later released on bail.

IV

- The third dimension along which the village is stratified is
- power. Power is unequally distributed among the various groups of people of the village. This inequality in the distribution of

power is, to a large extent, related to the inequality of ownership and control of land and to the inequality of status. The distribution of power again influences the ownership and control of land and the status system.

By power we mean political power here. In the use of the term power we follow Max Weber who defined it as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests".⁵ He further says, "All conceivable qualities of a person and all conceivable combinations of circumstances put him in a position to impose his will in a given situation."⁶ Qualities of persons and combinations of circumstances put persons in a position to play an important role to bring about political changes in Meherpur.

The sources of power in the village are two-fold, internal and external, and the village politics is therefore, influenced by both internal and external forces. The internal sources of power are the ownership and control of the means of production, high status, control in the Union Parishad, physical and intellectual capabilities of the individuals, social service, tact and use of force which help one to accumulate political power. Externally, the sources of power are the political parties, the influence of political figures (especially the M. P. of that constituency) control over the agencies of the distribution of relief, contact with high administrative and police officials, and such other factors which are responsible for giving one political power from outside the village.

We find that the control over human and material resources in Meherpur helps one to accumulate power in the village. As Nicholas has rightly observed, "The resources for political action ... are of two kinds: material and human. Material resources are the economic factors — money, machines, goods, lands, mines, etc., — that an individual may use in social action to help bring about the outcome he desires..."⁷ "A human resource is a

5 Weber, Max—*The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons) The Free press of Glanco, New York. 1947. p—152.

6. Ibid.—p-153.

7. Nicholas, Ralph W.—"Segmentary Factional political systems". In

man, some aspect of whose behaviour is under the control of the resource-holder"⁸

The material resources in Meherpur are land and money. It is through control over land and money and through control over men by the use of manipulative skills that one acquires and maintains power in the village. There is competition and conflict between persons and between groups for the control of human and material resources as we find in Meherpur. Whoever could gain control over human and material resources, gained control over political power in Meherpur.

The village is stratified on the basis of unequal distribution of power, into those who wield power and the rest. Power is concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and the rest have little political power and influence.

The last election of Meherpur Union Parishad reveals the power structure of Meherpur village under study. The Meherpur Union consists of the three revenue villages or *mouzas* of Meherpur, Keutkhali and Umpara. The village Meherpur under study is one of the constituent villages of Meherpur *mouza*. This division is for the purpose of revenue administration. But, for the election of the Union Parishad, Meherpur Union is divided into a number of wards and from every ward one member is elected to represent it in the Union Parishad. Meherpur village has two wards and they have elected two members to the Union Parishad in the last election. The chairman and vice-chairman of the Meherpur Union Parishad have also been elected from Meherpur village, though the whole adult population of Meherpur Union are their electorate. Not only that, the other candidates who have contested for the posts of chairman and vice-chairman are also from Meherpur. It shows that Meherpur village is of considerable political importance in the Meherpur Union.

In fact, Meherpur village had an important political role even in the past. The high status Muslims and upper caste Hindus

Marc J Swartz, Victor W. Turner, and Arthur Tuden (Eds) *Political Anthropology*. Aldine publishing Company. Chicago pp. 49-59

8 Nicholas, Ralph W. "Rules, Resources, and Political Activity" In Marc J Swartz (Ed) *Local level politics* University of London Press, London, p-300-301.

of Meherpur were very prominent and influential in the locality. They always controlled the local affairs and local politics. There were no such influential Muslims and Hindus in the other villages of Meherpur Union. They were influential, because they were traditionally owning and controlling land and they were the first in the locality to receive education. So, they were the traditional repositories of power in the village and in the neighbourhood.

In the last election of Meherpur Union Parishad which was based on universal adult franchise, two members and the chairman and vice-chairman were elected from Meherpur village. Two panels of candidates contested the posts of chairman and vice-chairman. In one of the panels, the candidate for the post of chairman was from the famous Kazi family of Meherpur. His candidate for the post of vice-chairman had keen ties with him. Both of them belonged to Kazipara which was inhabited by the *khandan* Muslims. Both of them were landowners. The candidate for the chairmanship of this panel was settled in Dacca. But he spent most of his time in the village as he was active in village politics for a long time. The candidate for the post of vice-chairman was a permanent resident of the village and was much known for the social service of his eldest son. In the other panel, the candidate for chairmanship belonged to Bhuyapara and the candidate for the post of vice-chairman belonged to Singher Majhipara. Both of them were landowners. The candidate for chairman in this panel was a *khandan* Muslim who had also settled in Dacca, but used to visit his village home occasionally. He was an associate professor in a science department in the University of Dacca. The candidate for the post of vice-chairman, though a landowner, belonged to the *khandan* Muslim group. He was a teacher in Meherpur High School who left his teaching job to join village politics a few years ago. The panel headed by the professor won the election. After the result of the election was announced, candidate for chairmanship of the other panel filed a suit in the court of law challenging the eligibility of the professor's candidature as he was an employee of Dacca University, an autonomous organization. He was waiting for a verdict from the court when the author was in the field. The professor and the ex-teacher took charge as chairman and vice-chairman

respectively of Meherpur Union Parishad and started working in their respective capacities.

The present chairman was born in the village but he left the village in his boyhood for receiving education in the city like most of the boys of old *khandan* families. His ancestral home was in Bhuyapara and his family had kin-relationship with Kazi families. He was related to the candidates of both chairmanship and vice-chairmanship in the other panel. He received his M Sc. degree from the University of Dacca, and then went abroad to do research leading to Ph. D. After obtaining Ph. D. he came back to the country and joined the University of Dacca as a teacher. Though he used to come to his village home to collect the crops of his leased out land and for other personal work, he was never interested in village politics. He was, of course, nominated the chairman of the Managing Committee of the Meherpur High School by the Government. He would come to the village sometimes for that purpose also. But his decision to contest for the chairmanship of the Union Parishad came as a surprise to the people of Meherpur and other villages of the Union. It was beyond the expectation of the people that a highly educated man of his status and who was settled in Dacca, could contest for the chairmanship of the Union Parishad. Earlier, he was never actively interested in national or local politics.

The vice-chairman was born and brought up in the village. He was the eldest son of a poor peasant of Meherpur. Both the father and the son struggled with fortune for a long time. Ultimately, the uneducated poor father emerged as a small trader in Meherpur market and was also able to purchase some agricultural holdings. The educated son (B. Com graduate) became a teacher in Meherpur High School. The son was not satisfied with a poor teaching job. To change his fortune, he left the teaching job and joined village politics in the late sixties. He was also doing business since he left his teaching job. He and his brothers were well built and his brothers were also reputed for their physical might and roughness.

Though the vice-chairman had no role in the liberation struggle of Bangladesh, he was nominated the chairman of the Awami League of Meherpur Union by the then M. P (Member

of Parliament) from that constituency as he was a very trusted man of the local M. P. The local M. P. was a veteran Awami Leaguer and an important office bearer of the party. The Awami League provided the leadership in the liberation struggle of Bangladesh. The leaders and workers of the Awami League, therefore, got the upper hand and priority in all matters of national life after the liberation. So, after he (the present vice-chairman) was nominated the chairman of Meherpur Union Awami League, he became all the more powerful.

There was a man behind the scene who played a very vital role in this election, and it was he who influenced the professor to decide to contest for chairmanship. It was again he who had chosen the ambitious chairman of Meherpur Union Awami League to be the running-mate of the professor for election strategy and for many other reasons. This man behind the scene was an advocate of Dacca High Court and settled in Dacca. Originally, he hailed from Bhuyapara of Meherpur. He belonged to a *Khandan* landowning family having a modern house in Bhuyapara. The advocate was not interested in the affairs of the village till the independence of Bangladesh, though he used to visit his village home occasionally. The advocate, who is now in his late forties and a confirmed bachelor, became very much interested in the affairs of the village just after the liberation of Bangladesh when he came in contact with an international organization which had then intended to give relief to the war-stricken people of Bangladesh.

After the liberation of Bangladesh, the International Red Cross and many other international organizations and agencies and many foreign countries came to the help of the war and famine-stricken people. They gave huge amounts of relief in both cash and kind. Most of these organizations worked through the Government and a few worked directly with the help of local people. The Government relief was distributed through the relief committee at the Union level. The chairmen of the Union Awami League were the ex-officio chairmen of the Union relief committees. In Meherpur Union, the present vice-chairman was the chairman of the Meherpur Union relief committee by virtue of his chairmanship of Union Awami League. It is complained that the chairman and

members of the Meherpur Union relief committee have stolen much of the relief money and relief goods which were given by the Government for distribution among the needy and deserving people.

The huge amount of relief that poured into Meherpur was due to the effort of the advocate. The advocate was made the local chief of international relief organization through the influence of his brother who was a high official of that organization. This organization decided to distribute its relief money and relief goods through its local branch, of which the advocate was made the chief. He had chosen his own village for relief distribution. Of course, a meagre amount of relief was also distributed among the people of the neighbouring village.

Before distributing the relief goods, he made a survey of the needy people of the village for the proper distribution of relief. Blankets, clothes and milk powder were the major items of relief distributed among the villagers. Many allegations were made against the advocate for making gross injustice in relief distribution.

When I began to conduct a census for my present research I found it very difficult to do this, specially among the fishermen, black-smiths and carpenters who belonged to the Scheduled Caste, and among the landless labourers and sharecroppers. In one of the *paras* when I started writing the particulars of a fisherman household, the fisherwomen of the *para* assembled and asked the fisherman whom I was interviewing at that time not to give any reply to my queries. They started shouting at me at the top of their voice. They were in fact, abusing the advocate for not giving them any relief. So, why should they tell their names and particulars again? The fishermen present there wanted to prevent them by explaining to them the purpose of my census but in vain. They became more and more furious and started weeping and crying for the great neglect done to them by the advocate and by the Union relief committee. Hearing this hue and cry, many of their male members came to the spot and forced them to stop and disperse. By the time I was conducting the survey, the fishermen, carpenters and the landless labourers knew that I was neither an agent of the advocate nor had any

vested interest and, therefore, they helped me in my work. Even then, they sometimes asked me quietly and secretly whether I could provide them any relief. During the last days of my stay they used to request me to write about their conditions and the injustices done to them by the advocate and by the chairman of the relief committee in my book.

It was through relief work that the advocate came to the village scene and became gradually interested in other affairs of the village and ultimately emerged as a political figure. He needed the professor for his goodwill and the Union Awami League chairman for a strong political footing to fight the candidates of the other panel. He campaigned and spent money for his candidates and defeated the rival candidates who were also very influential in the village.

The defeated candidate for chairmanship was an aged land-owning *khandan* Muslim of Kazipara who had a long and chequered political career. He was also born in the village and received his education in the city and settled in Dacca. But he was always in touch with his village. He had been active in national and village politics for the past thirty years. He was first elected the president of the Meherpur Union Board in 1958. The candidate for the post of vice-chairman of his panel was elected vice-chairman of the Meherpur Union Board in the same election in 1958. The group which they represented in the Union Board at that time had some initial set-back after the emergence of Ayub Khan to power.

The Union Board along with all other elected bodies became dissolved with the promulgation of Martial Law by Ayub Khan. So their tenure as president and vice-president of Meherpur Union Board in 1958 was rather short. The defeated candidate for chairmanship again contested for the post of chairman of Meherpur Union Council in 1962 but he lost the election to an ordinary villager (*girhastha*) of the neighbouring village. He gradually regained his position and he was again elected the chairman of the Meherpur Union Council in 1965. He served the village and the Union as chairman of Meherpur Union till 1969.

His participation in the national and village politics gives us two different pictures about his ideologies and activities. At

the national level, he belonged to the National Awami Party (NAP) led by Maulana Bhashani. The National Awami Party was one of the major political parties of Pakistan which had a strong hold in the then East Pakistan and which was known as rather radical in its policies and programmes. The NAP was committed to the programme of socialism and non-communalism. The NAP leaders and workers had left leanings and they were under severe repression during the Ayub and Yahya regimes. As an active worker of the NAP at one time the defeated chairman of Meherpur Union Parishad also suffered repression in the pre-Ayub era and in the beginning of Ayub administration.

But at the village level, he (defeated candidate for chairmanship) was a typical basic democrat involved in all types of misdeeds. As the chairman of Meherpur Union Council, he misused his power. In settling disputes, he took bribes and gave unjust verdicts. He gave possession of houses and land vacated by Hindu migrants to people who could satisfy him with bribes or by some other means. The trees of some of these vacated houses were cut at his instance for the personal use. So, partly because of the bad reputation he had earned as the chairman of Meherpur Union Council and partly because of the strong opposition he had to face from the advocate and the well reputed professor, he lost the election to Meherpur Union Parishad in 1973.

The candidate for the post of vice-chairman of his panel, a *khandan* landowner was an Awami Leaguer in the fifties and early sixties. But he became inactive in politics later on. He claimed to be a pioneer worker of the Awami League who organized the party in the locality. It was in his house that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with other Awami League leaders took rest and food when they came to attend a meeting of the local Awami League in the early sixties. Subsequently, he lost contact with Awami League leaders due to his inactivity in politics. But after the liberation of Bangladesh, he once went to see Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman remembered him and asked him about his welfare.

He (defeated candidate for vice-chairmanship) has enough landed property by which he can easily maintain his family. Recently he has somehow obtained two import licences in the

name of his eldest son, and this is now an additional source of his income. He does not like the present Awami League workers of the locality. In spite of the reputation of his son, he lost the election to his opponent since he was the running-mate of a candidate who had a very bad reputation in the village and because of the opposition faced from the advocate and the professor.

Of the two members elected from the village, one belonged to the professor's panel and the other to the rival panel. The Hindu fisherman member was elected from the professor's panel. He does not catch fish now-a-days. The other member is an ordinary Muslim from Jor Digirpar. He is a veteran worker of the National Awami Party led by Muzaffar Ahmed. He has a small landed property and his brother is a homeopathic practitioner in Meherpur market. He sided with the rival group of the professor in the election of Meherpur Union Parishad. His personal influence is responsible for his victory in the election.

The Union Parishad is a formal body. Besides, there is one informal body through which power is exercised. This is known as *salish* or *shava* (meeting or arbiters to settle disputes). The informal body to settle the disputes in the village is *salish* or *shava* and the members of this body are called *matbars*. The *salish* usually sits in the house of a *matbar*, especially in the house of a *khandan matbar*. Sometimes it sits in a shop in the village market and sometimes in the field of the community centre.

When there is a dispute in the village, the parties involved in the dispute seek arbitration from the *matbars* of the village. The *matbars* then meet in a *shava* or *salish* where the contending parties are also present. After hearing all the parties and witnesses, they pronounce the judgement. The *matbars* are the arbiters of village disputes. In all the disputes, the *matbars* may not be the same set of persons. It depends upon the contending parties involved in a particular dispute. In Meherpur, however, the *matbars* are generally the same set of persons in almost all the *salishes* of the village for settling disputes. The *matbars* of Meherpur are sometimes called to settle the disputes of even the neighbouring villages.

The advocate, the present vice-chairman of the Union Parishad and his father, and the defeated candidates for the posts of chairman and vice-chairman of the Union Parishad are the *matbars* of the village. Besides, there is one *matbar* from the low caste Hindus and one from the scheduled caste. Thus, more or less the same set of persons dominate the formal institution such as the Union Parishad as well as the informal institution such as *salish* or *shava* in the village.

A part of the function of the informal body such as *salish* is now being replaced by the formal body such as the Union Parishad. Now, either the Union Parishad takes the initiative to settle a dispute or the contending parties seek help of the Union Parishad for arbitration. However, *salish* is called often to settle minor disputes among the villagers.

Most of the *matbars* (members of *salish*) of the village are members of the Union Parishad. It has become a convention in the village that the chairman, vice-chairman and members of the Union Parishad must be called in any *salish* and they are the most important and influential members of the *salish*. No *salish* can be held without them. So, the informal and formal bodies to settle village disputes are almost identical.

Thus, the power-wielders in Meherpur to-day are still some declining *khandan* landowning Muslims and a few non-*khandan* rising Muslim landowners. The chairman of the Meherpur Union Parishad and the chairman and vice-chairman candidates of the rival panel are declining, in the sense that they have sold out some of their land by now. On the other hand, the vice-chairman of the Union Parishad is a recent landowner whose ancestors had no land. He is not yet regarded as a *Khandan*.

Most of the upper caste Hindus have migrated to India. The remaining upper caste Hindu population who are still residing in Meherpur have no representation in the Union Parishad and there is no *matbar* from among them. They lend support to the present Muslim power-wielders of the village.

The landowning class in Meherpur roughly corresponds to Muslim high status groups and Hindu upper castes and most of the power-wielders belong to the landowning class. The

sharecroppers who stand in the middle of the class hierarchy roughly correspond to low status groups and low castes. The landless labourers who are at the bottom of the class hierarchy have the lowest status. The Scheduled castes also have the lowest status. None other than a few landowners have sufficient say in village politics.

The stratification pattern of Meherpur of an earlier time has undergone changes. The main factors responsible for such a change are the social processes started by modern education, urbanization and industrialization, the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the *zamindari* abolition of 1950 and the promulgation of Martial laws in 1958 and again in 1969, the movement for autonomy and the liberation struggle of Bangladesh and finally the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign independent state.

To-day the stratification pattern of Meherpur is not as rigid as it was three decades ago. The social system of Meherpur has become relatively open to-day while it was rather rigid at an earlier time.

REVIEW

Sir William Jones The Romantics And The Victorians By—Md. Abu Taher Mojumder Published by Begum Zakia Sultana ; Distributor : University Press Limited ; Size—Demy, Price : Taka 10.

Sir William Jones was one of those humanitarian Britons who are still remembered in this part of the world for their contribution to making the East better known in the West. He came to Calcutta as a judge of the Supreme Court at a time when the British rulers of Bengal were busy in consolidating their power as well as amassing wealth through foul means. Sir William Jones proved himself an exception by not joining the band of exploiters and by actively working to mitigate the sufferings of the exploited and the oppressed. In the East he found a vast field for research : there were so many things to be explored and thereby expand the dimension of human knowledge. With this aim in view he played the leading role in establishing the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. He was already a reputed orientalist when he came here , his fame increased greatly after the establishment of the Asiatic Society and his increased devotion to orientalism. But apart from being an orientalist, he was also a literary artist of considerable repute. The book under discussion offers a study of his influence as a literary artist..

During Jones's time English literature had become very dull and insipid because of the overuse of classical literary resources, set pattern of phrasing and stock responses. Jones very keenly felt that it needed revitalization and by strongly and ardently advocating orientalism purely, primarily and essentially for this purpose, he became both a pioneer and a revolutionary. He learnt Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Sanskrit, and translated extensively from all these into European languages in order to draw the attention of the literary public to the fresh literary resources he had discovered. He thereby, laid the foundation for the oriental aspect of romanticism and exercised considerable influence on both the Romantics and the Victorians. English literary historians did not, however, pay enough attention to this aspect of Jones's career.

The literary minded people of our country are little aware of Jones's interesting contributions.

In *Sir William Jones — the Romantics And The Victorians*, Prof. Mojumder has introduced us to these contributions of Jones as an orientalist and thereby he has drawn our attention to a little known aspect of English literature. we learnt from this book that the East had not only borrowed from the West in matters concerning literature, but had also contributed to the latter's enrichment.

The book is mainly divided into five parts. The introduction, which is the first part of the book, traces oriental influence on English literature of the eighteenth century before Jones, and also throws important light on the significance of Jones's influence by comparing him with some of major orientalists of the time. In the second part the author has studied Jones's influence on his contemporaries such as Edward Gibbon, Edmund Burke, Dugald Stewart, John Scott of Amwell, Thomas Campbell, William Beckford, Dr. John Leyden, Thomas Maurice, etc. He also suggests that even Blake may have been influenced by Jones. The third part of the book throws light on Jones's influence on English Romantic poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley Keats, Robert Southey, Thomas Moore, etc. It appears from this study that oriental influence was quite pervasive on Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Southey. This is perhaps one of the very interesting parts of the book. The other interesting part is the next one. In it the author traced Jones's influence on the Victorians. Through a detailed study he has shown what great hold the East had on Tennyson's genius. This is quite revealing for the students of Tennyson. The other Victorians such as Edward Byles Cowell, Edward Fitzgerald, etc., were also influenced by Jones's works about the east. The last part of the book gives an extensive bibliography which will be of great help to scholars and researchers on Jones.

The book is full of quotations which support the author's arguments. He did not, however, try to impose his opinions on the reader and left things to themselves, thereby allowing a willing reader to draw his own conclusions. It can, at any rate, be said that he has successfully widened the traditional notions

in Maharashtra. Although the Shivaji movement was officially launched by Tilak in 1896 when his followers and a large number of Maharashtra common folk celebrated the Shivaji birthday on April 15, 1896 at Raigad, but its ground was long before prepared by people like Rao Bahadur Gopalrao Hari Desmukh, popularly known as Lokahitwadi, Jyotirao Govindarao Phule, R. R. Bhagavat *et. al.* through their forceful writings on Shivaji and Indian nationalism. The national pride and spirit of the Maharashtra people were awakened in the middle of the nineteenth century and the people naturally look for the necessary inspiration in Shivaji, their great king. The unsuccessful rebellious act of Wasudeva in 1879 to establish a republican Government in Maharashtra through armed uprising following the footsteps of Shivaji also made significant contribution in creating a new national spirit among the Maharastrians.

Chapter 3 is devoted to Shivaji movement in Maharashtra. The author gives here a good account of Shivaji movement — its growth and development under the leadership of Lokamanya Tilak. The Shivaji movement flowed in two channels — (1) the Shivaji memorial movement whose object was to preserve and protect the tomb of Shivaji and other historical remnants of Maratha Kings and (2) the political Shivaji movement whose aim was to make Shivaji a 'National Hero' centering whom the Maharashtra people could unite and fight against the British imperialists. To this end Tilak was remarkably successful. The entire Maratha people were pulsating with newly discovered national spirit. But to Tilak the Shivaji movement is not an end in itself, to him the movement was a *modus operandi* for achieving a greater goal — the national emancipation of India. In the words of the author — "the Shivaji movement was a *modus operandi*, first to unite the people, second to inspire them with lofty ideal of political emancipation."

Chapter 4 deals with Shivaji movement in Bengal. The cult was first introduced to Bengal by Sakharan Ganesh Deusker, a Deoghar High School teacher and a political disciple of Tilak through his writings around 1902. The cult was brought to Bengal at a time when Bengali nationalism was at its peak following the partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon. Shivaji immedi-

ately became the national hero and idol of freedom fighter to the educated youths and intellectuals. The extremists particularly the members of the Anushilan and Jugantar began working Shivaji as their deity. But on the other hand, the character of the movement underwent a subtle but vital change — “it became very soon a spiritual and philosophical movement ultimately transforming itself into a cultural movement” in the hands of the intellectuals particularly Aurobindo, Bipin Chandra Pal and Rabindranath.

In chapter 5 Mr. Samarth outlines the spread of Shivaji movement in other provinces of India. Though the movement was not as effective as in Maharashtra or Bengal, but it certainly made some impact in the U. P. and Punjab. Chapter 6 deals with prescribed and forfeited literature on Shivaji which depicted him as a champion of militant nationalism and the defender of national independence. The chapter is a valuable one as it reveals to the general reader how the British Raj reacted against the movement at that time.

Mr. Samarth presented the facts of the movement and tried to analyse the events dispassionately in the context of political and social conditions of India obtaining at that time. He left it to the readers to draw conclusion from his analysis and the facts presented. He successfully brought out the inner philosophy of the movement and its political aim. At the same time he was critical of the attitude of some extremists and conservatives who tried to give the movement a religious and communal tone. He was equally critical of the conservative Muslim attitude to the movement who, according to the author, failed to appreciate the national awakening that was taking place through this movement among the people of India particularly of Maharashtra. From a historical point of view the success of Shivaji is considerable particularly considering his fight against many odds. To the Marathas he was the champion of defence of their country and *Dharma* against the imperialist tone represented by northern Mughal empire. In modern terminology, to the nationalists, he stands for national aspiration and national emancipation against the foreign rule. He could be, therefore, easily accepted as a ‘National Hero’ by the Maharastrian people. But to make him

a hero on an all-India plane, as was conceived by Tilak, the leader of the Shivaji movement, is bound to create some confusion and reaction particularly in the Muslim mind. One should not forget the historical relation between the Muslims and the Hindus. To the Muslims in general, Mughal empire represents an established and legal Government of India. Shivaji, from this point of view, is a rebel acting against the established Government. To the Muslims, Mughal Government is neither alien nor imperialist, although it swallowed Bijapur and other Deccanic Muslim States, because Emperor Aurangzeb was thought to be serving the cause of Islam. It is, therefore, not unnatural that the Shivaji movement created confusion, misunderstanding and adverse reaction among the Muslim Population of India. The failure on the part of the Muslims to appreciate the Shivaji movement as a means for awakening the nationalism of the Indian people and uniting them against the British Raj lies in the fact that the muslim mind at that time was not prepared to accept the concept of Nationalism as presented by the nationalists including Tilak. The conflict between the nationalist struggle and the established Government whether alien or local is still a major contradiction in national liberation struggle. The author should have dealt in some details on this aspect of the Shivaji movement i. e., its impact and reaction on the common Muslims of India. Lokamanya himself was aware of the possible adverse reaction of the Muslims towards his Shivaji movement. He tried to convince the Muslims by clearly stating that his movement is neither directed against the Muslims nor was it communalistic in approach and that Shivaji is the symbol and ideal of Nationalist struggle. But his arguments definitely failed to convince the Muslims.

The author has rightly pointed out that although the modus operandi of Tilak failed in the later period as it became outdated and obsolete with time, the Shivaji movement, however, created a new zeal and vigour in Maharashtra and to some extent in other parts of India and its impact was long felt in the national movement of India. No doubt, at one time the Shivaji cult directly and indirectly influenced the anarchists and extremists throughout India, whose contribution to Indian political freedom is no less significant.

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